stags and daggers

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stags and daggers

by vvillgraham

Summary

Hannibal had always thought of will as his plaything. Their relationship however was becoming more intricate. As Hannibal lost himself in will, will found himself lost as well. Hannibal explores his budding relationship with will whilst also trying to save will from himself.

Curly locks.

The first thing Will noticed was that his sheets had once again stuck to him, his nightmares had been recurring more often leading to this situation more often. He couldn't bear the stench of his own sweat, so he struggled to peel the sheets off of himself. After finally freeing himself from the damp linen prison, he slowly made his way to the bathroom to take a refreshing shower.

As he stood there, he could feel the dampness of his sheets still clinging to his skin. He had been having recurrent nightmares lately and it was starting to take a toll on him.

Will stood in front of the sink, the sound of water running filling the small bathroom. He leaned over, his eyes fixated on the drain as if it held the answers to all his problems. He was lost in thought, contemplating the day ahead of him. He wondered which crime scene he would be called to, what horrors he would witness, and how he would cope with it all. He thought about his therapy session later, wondering if it would bring any clarity to his troubled mind.

He scooped up the cold water in his hands, feeling the chill spread through his fingers. He splashed it onto his face, feeling the water drip down his chin and onto his shirt. The water was refreshing, and it helped him clear his mind even if it was just for a moment. He looked at his reflection in the mirror, noticing his curly locks were starting to become unruly. He took a deep breath and straightened up, ready to face the day ahead. He grasped the shower dials with precision as he adjusted the water temperature, preparing to step into the stream of water to wash away the lingering remnants of his nightmares.

As he showered, Will's mind wandered back to the case he had been working on. The gruesome details of the crime scene were etched in his memory, and he couldn't shake the feeling of unease that had settled in his stomach. He tried to distract himself by focusing on the task at hand, but his mind kept drifting back to the victim's lifeless body, the blood-soaked floor, and the haunting silence of the room.

He finished his shower and stepped out, wrapping a towel around his waist. He glanced at himself in the mirror once more, running a hand through his curly locks. He knew he had to put the case out of his mind for the time being and focus on the therapy session ahead. He took a deep breath and walked out of the bathroom.

As he walked through the door, his furry companions bounded over to him, tails wagging excitedly. They eagerly licked the droplets of water off his skin, clearly overjoyed to see their owner. He chuckled and gently pushed them away as he made his way to the wardrobe.

He managed to piece together an outfit despite the limited wardrobe choices available to him, selecting articles of clothing that were of a similar monotone color scheme. The end result was a scrappy but functional ensemble that would suffice for the occasion at hand. As he looked at himself in the mirror, he couldn't help but feel a sense of satisfaction at his resourcefulness and ability to make do with what he had.

He was never much of a morning person, always struggling to peel himself out of bed and parting with his dogs. As he stared into their big, loving eyes, he couldn't help but feel a pang of sadness. He knew that in just a few moments, he would have to leave for work and be apart from his dogs for the next day or so It was always hard to separate himself from such loving creatures, but he took solace in the fact that they would be eagerly awaiting his return. As he gave them each a pat on the head and whispered a soft goodbye, he promised to make it up to them later with a long evening walk and plenty of belly rubs.

Will put on a coat, which was still heavy and warm, and pulled up the collar to shield his ears from the winter chill. He had begun to feel the cold more acutely in recent days, and as he stepped outside, the sudden shift from the warmth of his home to the freezing outdoors was jarring. He took a deep breath and exhaled, watching as his breath turned to a misty vapor, as if ice crystals were forming in the air around him. Despite the cold, he felt a sense of exhilaration as he set out on his walk, eager to explore the snowy landscape and the stillness of the winter morning.

As he was relishing in his enjoyment, his peace and quiet were suddenly interrupted by the shrill, jarring ring of his cell phone. The unexpected sound shattered the tranquil atmosphere, causing him to be disturbed from his borderline dissociative state. He fumbled for a moment, trying to grasp his phone and answer the call, but the ringing persisted, piercing through his ears and rattling his nerves. Eventually, he managed to answer the phone, but the interruption had already disrupted his peaceful moment, leaving him feeling frustrated and annoyed. However, his frustration was quickly absolved for one obvious reason.

“Hey Hannibal.” Will smirked.

snow fall.

Hannibal had called Will earlier to inform him that he was waiting for him at the end of his road. They had another case to tackle and apparently, Hannibal was already in the area. Will, already feeling tired started the trek to the end of the road. As he walked, he couldn't help but feel exhausted. The sound of ice compressing under his feet seemed to amplify, making his head throb. He sighed, wishing he could just lie down and rest. But he knew he couldn't. He had a job to do. Will tried to shake off the fatigue and focus on the task at hand. He wondered what kind of case Jack had in store for him this time. Will couldn't deny that he was both excited and nervous to find out.

As Will approached, he couldn't help but feel a sense of unease. Hannibal's presence had a way of making him feel both excited and nervous, unsure of what to expect next. The cold air only heightened his senses, causing his heart rate to quicken as he drew closer. The sound of his footsteps seemed to echo in the silence, each step feeling heavier than the last. He tried to shake off the feeling of exhaustion that seemed to weigh him down, knowing that he had a job to do. Despite his attempts to focus, his mind kept wandering to the kind of case Jack had in store for him this time.

Hannibal stood almost motionless, his hands still buried in his pockets, his breath coming out in visible puffs. Will couldn't help but feel a sense of intimidation as he approached. He wondered what Hannibal was thinking, what his motives were for requesting his presence. There was always an air of mystery that surrounded Hannibal, a sense that there was more to him than what met the eye. Will tried to steady his nerves as he drew closer, his heart rate still quickening with each step.

"Good morning, Will," Hannibal greeted his companion as he approached the car. Will nodded in acknowledgement, but Hannibal could tell that something was off. While the lack of verbal communication was not unusual between the two of them, there was something in Will's demeanour that suggested he was particularly exhausted this morning.

Hannibal circled around to the driver's side of the vehicle, keeping a watchful eye on Will the whole time. As he opened the door, he couldn't help but wonder what might be causing his companion's fatigue. Was it a late night spent chasing down leads on their current case? Or was it something more personal, something that Will was hesitant to share with Hannibal?

Regardless, Hannibal decided to keep a close eye on Will throughout the day. He knew how easily the man could become overwhelmed, and he was determined to make sure that Will had everything he needed to get through the day.

When they finally arrived at the scene, Will hesitated for a moment before getting out of the car, feeling as if a wave of exhaustion had washed over him. The long hours of driving and the stress of the case had finally taken a toll on him. As Will struggled to regain his composure, Hannibal approached the scene without hesitation, his face remaining unbroken. Hannibal's calm and collected demeanour was a stark contrast to Will's frazzled state. It was as if Hannibal had an endless supply of energy and Will couldn't help but feel envious of him.

Despite his exhaustion, Will knew that he had a job to do and he couldn't let his fatigue get in the way of solving the case.

Will let out a deep sigh as he stepped out of the car, his body aching from the long drive. He couldn't help but feel relieved to see that the snow had melted somewhat, offering some respite from the icy chill that had been gnawing at him since morning. However, he soon realised that the crowd of officers around him was making him feel even more agitated than usual. He reached for his pocket, took out a few aspirin pills and popped them into his mouth without a second thought. He knew he had taken more than he should have, especially on an empty stomach, but he was willing to risk it just to alleviate his persistent headache.

Hannibal, a seasoned connoisseur of the criminal underworld, was already deeply engrossed in the scene before him. He watched intently as William, with a bitter expression plastered on his exhausted face, threw his head back and swallowed the pills. Meanwhile, Will approached gradually, carefully taking in every minute detail both in and around the scene.

Hannibal's keen senses allowed him to detect the subtle nuances of William's heavy breaths, a telltale sign that something was undoubtedly amiss. In fact, most people would have overlooked this detail entirely, but not Hannibal. He knew that this was a sign of deeper trouble, and his instincts told him that he needed to act fast to ensure that William was safe.

The two stood together, their eyes surveying the crime scene in silence. The air was thick with tension as they tried to piece together what had happened. Will, the more experienced of the two, was meticulously assessing the situation, taking in every detail and analyzing it with his sharp mind. As he did so, Hannibal watched him intently, studying his every move. But after a while, Will found himself slipping away, lost in thought. He was transported to another place and time, deep in his own mind, as he tried to make sense of the evidence before him. Hannibal, ever the observer, noticed the change in Will's demeanor immediately. He watched as his pupils dilated and his expression slowly dropped, watching him start to zone out. Hannibal wondered what was going through Will's mind and whether he had uncovered some new insight into the case.

Hannibal placed a hand on Will's arm. "Come back to me, Will," he whispered softly, watching as Will's head snapped up in surprise. After registering the unexpected physical contact, Will clenched his jaw and subtly moved himself away from Hannibal's touch. Hannibal could sense the tension in Will's body and the unease in his eyes. He knew that Will was struggling to maintain his composure, to keep his emotions in check. Hannibal couldn't help but wonder what was going through Will's mind at that moment, what inner demons he was battling. Nevertheless, he remained silent, waiting patiently for Will to speak, to share whatever was on his mind.

Hannibal was observing Will's behavior as he muttered, "we can talk about it later." Although he didn't break eye contact with Will, he tilted his head down to acknowledge the request. Will knew that he needed to get on with his work, but he also needed some space to think about things. "For now, I need everyone to leave, or at least give me some space," Will said, hoping that Hannibal and the others would understand his need for solitude. As he stood alone, Will let himself sink into the crime scene, letting the criminal's mindset sink its jaws into him. Will's breathing hiked up as he imagined the scene being built from the ground up.

He visualised the killer laying the foundation and the murders taking place one by one. He could hear the sounds of the screams of the victims as the scene was constructed.

As Will processed every detail, the scene began to build around him.

The bodies collected around him like fallen leaves, each one telling a story of its own. Will studied them carefully, noting the position of each one, the expression frozen on their faces. He wondered what had brought them to this place, what had caused them to meet such a violent end.

As he stood there, lost in thought, Will knew that he had to find the answers. He had to solve this crime and bring the perpetrators to justice.

As he stood there, the weight of the scene pressed down on him like a physical burden. The lifeless bodies, which seemed to have risen from the ground, fixed their sight on him. He knew, deep down, that it wasn't real, but the fear that gripped him was all too real. Suddenly, one of the corpses reached out and grabbed his ankle, causing him to let out a small, involuntary noise. The other bodies joined in, almost in unison, chanting his name as if he were somehow responsible for their plight. The sound of their voices seemed to grow louder and more menacing with every passing second, echoing through the chamber and reverberating in his mind. He tried desperately to shake off their grip, but it was like trying to break free from a vise.

He heard them saying "Will, Will, Will" over and over again. The sound was overwhelming, and he felt as if he were drowning in a sea of voices. He covered his eyes with his palms, hoping to shut out the world around him. He wrapped his fingers around his ears, trying to block out the noise, but it only seemed to grow louder. He felt as if he were losing his mind, as if the world were closing in on him. He started breathing frantically, trying to calm himself down, trying to convince himself that it wasn't real. But the voices persisted, a never-ending chorus that refused to be silenced.

“Will,” He knew that voice. It was Hannibal's voice, the same voice that had been there for him countless times before. But in the midst of the panic, Will couldn't help but push it away. He felt someone grab him by the shoulders, and his fear took over. He shot back, falling over himself and landing on the floor. His breathing only worsened, and he felt like he was suffocating.

“Will,” the voice called out again. Hannibal was there, his face a blur as Will's vision speckled and blurred. He struggled to make sense of what was happening, but his mind was a jumbled mess of fear and confusion.

“H… Hannibal?” Will asked, his voice weak and trembling.

“Yes, Will, it's me,” Hannibal replied, trying to sound calm and reassuring. “Can you breathe slower for me?”

Will tried to do as he was told, but it was difficult. Every breath felt like a struggle, and his chest felt tight and constricted. He tried to stand up, still in fight or flight mode, trying to get

away from whatever was causing this reaction. But as he stood, his vision worsened, and he stumbled back. Hannibal darted out to steady him, but Will met him with retaliation.

“Don't touch me!” Will shouted, his voice shaking. Tears were starting to form in his eyes. He was scared, confused, and didn't know what was happening.

Hannibal held up his hands in a gesture of surrender. “I won't touch you, Will. Nobody will touch you. I just want to help you. Can you tell me what's going on?”

Will shook his head, feeling like he was choking on his own fear. Hannibal didn't push him, just stood there and waited patiently. Finally, Will took a deep breath and tried to speak.

“I don't know,” he said, his voice barely above a whisper. He looked down at his hands, which were shaking. The memory of the gruesome scene in front of him was still fresh in his mind, haunting him. “The bodies, they.. I thought they.. I, I lost control,” he finally managed to say, his voice trembling. Will's mind was racing, trying to make sense of what had happened.

Hannibal took a step closer to Will, his voice soft and reassuring. "It's okay, Will. You're safe now. Take a deep breath and focus on my voice." Will nodded shakily, still feeling overwhelmed by the panic attack. Hannibal continued to speak in his usual calm and steady tone, guiding Will through a series of breathing exercises to help him calm down. After a few minutes, Will's breathing started to slow down, and he felt a bit more in control. Hannibal stayed by his side, offering support and comfort as Will slowly regained his composure.

After a few minutes, Will had calmed down enough to stand up and face the scene again. Hannibal remained by his side, offering silent support as Will tried to shake off the fear and confusion.

Will didn't waste any time in explaining his findings to Jack, providing him with detailed information about what he had discovered. Jack listened intently, grateful for Will's help, and then sent him on his way. As he watched Will leave, Jack couldn't help but feel a sense of admiration for the younger man's analytical skills and intuition.

Once Will had left earshot, Jack slowly turned to Hannibal, his eyes betraying the concern he felt for his protege. "Hannibal, can I have a word with you?" he began, his voice low and serious. "I need to discuss Will with you." Hannibal nodded, his expression inscrutable.

"As Will's supervisor," Jack continued, "I have a duty to ensure his safety and well-being. I can't help but worry about what happened earlier. I know Will is a capable agent, but I can't shake the feeling that something is off. Do you know anything that could help me understand what's going on with him?"

Hannibal's gaze was steady, but something in his eyes made Jack uneasy. "I'm afraid I don't have any answers for you, Jack," he replied, his voice soft but firm. "Will is a complex individual, and his mind works in ways that are difficult to predict. But I assure you, I'll keep an eye on him and do what I can to support him."

Jack nodded, but his worry remained. As they parted ways, he couldn't shake the feeling that something was amiss, and that his protege was in danger.

Words.

Chapter Summary

Hannibal and William engage in a therapy session, discussing the events of the morning and delving into William's emotions and fears. Hannibal expresses his interest and connection with William, despite his reservations about maintaining a professional distance. The session concludes with Hannibal inviting William to join him for dinner.

Hannibal, dressed in his usual impeccable suit, offered William a drink from a bottle he was holding. The bottle was made of glass, with a label that read "Vintage 1985". William tentatively declined the offer, feeling slightly intimidated by Hannibal's refined taste. As he took a seat, William breathed in the familiar scent of the room he usually sat in for therapy. He had been attending therapy sessions for a while now, but he had never taken the time to appreciate the surroundings. Today, however, he decided to take a closer look. The room was decorated with antique furniture that had clearly seen better days, but still exuded a certain charm. William couldn't help but admire the elegant paintings that adorned the walls; they seemed to transport him to another time and place. The fireplace crackled, casting a warm glow over the room and creating a cozy atmosphere. Hannibal, who seemed to sense William's unease, took his seat across from him and waited patiently for him to speak.

Neither of them spoke for several minutes, the silence between them feeling heavy and uncomfortable. Hannibal finally came to the realization that Will wasn't going to initiate a conversation, so he decided to take the lead.

"Can we talk about what happened this morning?" Hannibal asked, his voice soft yet insistent. He was hoping that Will would agree to discuss the unsettling events of that morning, but he couldn't be sure of what Will's reaction would be.

"What's there to talk about?" Hannibal's eyes slowly adjusted to the dimly lit room as he pondered Will's sudden change in tone. It was clear to him that there was an underlying hostility, but he also sensed a deep vulnerability and fear emanating from his companion. Hannibal knew that this was a pivotal moment in their relationship, and that there was much to discuss. He took a deep breath and began to speak, "There is much to talk about, Will. Your emotions, your fears," Hannibal said, his voice laced with a hint of tenderness. He paused for a moment, gazing deeply into Will's eyes. "And your desires."

Will felt his heart race as he met Hannibal's gaze. He had never felt this way before, but he couldn't deny the growing attraction he felt towards his therapist.

Hannibal's emotions were complex and difficult to untangle. He had always felt a certain affinity with Will, a sense of understanding that surpassed their professional relationship. He tried to push this feeling aside, to focus solely on his role as a therapist, but the more time he

spent with Will, the stronger his emotions became. It was a strange experience for Hannibal, who tended to be detached from others, and this interest and connection with Will was almost overwhelming. Nevertheless, Hannibal found himself drawn to Will's unique way of thinking, his intelligence and insight, and the challenges that their therapy sessions presented. As they delved deeper into the dark corners of Will's psyche, Hannibal found himself becoming more and more invested in the process. He knew that he should maintain a professional distance, but the growing bond between them made it increasingly difficult to do so. Despite his reservations, Hannibal couldn't help but feel that there was something special about Will, something that set him apart from all the other patients he had treated over the years.

"Will, I understand your hesitations about sharing with me, but my goal here is to help you. Do you understand what happened this morning?"

Will heaved a deep sigh, his chest rising and falling with each breath. He leaned back in the chair, feeling the cool leather against his skin. He absentmindedly rubbed his hands along his legs, feeling the fabric of his pants beneath his fingertips. He then placed his palms on his thighs, feeling the warmth of his own body against his skin. He let out a small sigh, then let his hands slide back down to his knees.

"Kind of," he said as his gaze locked onto the design on Hannibal's shoes. "I lost control of my mind, I let it take over." In that moment, he felt like he was no longer himself. It was as if his mind had been taken over by an outside force, and he was powerless to stop it. The feeling was terrifying, and he wondered if he would ever be able to regain control.

"What did you see when this happened?" Hannibal asked

As Will spoke, his voice was measured and controlled, though a hint of fear and anxiety still lingered behind his words. He recounted the events of that morning in vivid detail, describing the bodies he had seen and the overwhelming feeling of helplessness that had consumed him. Despite the horrors he had witnessed, Will managed to maintain his composure, his eyes fixed intently on Hannibal as he spoke. As he finished recounting his experience, he took a deep breath and sat back down in his chair, his body visibly relaxing as he did so.

"This is very clear in your mind Will. Is that what triggered your panic attack?" Will scoffed quietly, realising this was a serious question.

He paused to think about it, trying to find the words to describe the sudden wave of fear that had washed over him. "I think it was a combination of things," he said finally. "The pressure of the situation, the sense of being overwhelmed by the crowd and the noise, and the fear of not being able to do my job properly."

The psychologist nodded, making a note on his pad. "That's a very common response to a stressful situation," he said. "It's important to identify the triggers so that we can work on managing them in the future."

Hannibal leaned forward in his seat, his eyes fixed intently on Will. "I think there is something else going on here, Will," he said, his voice low and measured. "You possess a remarkable intellect, and your unique worldview is truly one-of-a-kind. However, it appears

that dishonesty may not be your strongest suit. It is worth noting that while you have the potential to use your work as a safety net, it was clear from the outset that you were struggling. This leads me to believe that there may be more to this situation than you have let on. It is important to understand that honesty with me is key to your success in therapy."

Will felt a shiver run down his spine as Hannibal spoke. He knew that there was some truth to what his therapist was saying, but he was also afraid to confront his own inner demons. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said, his voice barely above a whisper.

Hannibal smiled gently, his expression softening. "That's okay, Will," he said. "We can take things at your own pace."

Later on in the therapy session, the two individuals engaged in a lengthy conversation, providing ample opportunities for Will to open up about his feelings and concerns. The therapist was supportive throughout the discussion, offering words of encouragement and empathy.

After their session was over, Hannibal watched as Will gathered his things and stood up to leave. "Will," Hannibal called out, "before you go, would you care to join me for dinner?" Will paused for a moment, considering the offer. He was always hesitant to spend too much time with Hannibal Lecter, but he also knew that the man was a brilliant psychiatrist and a skilled conversationalist. Plus, he couldn't deny that he was curious about what Hannibal had in store for dinner. With a small nod, Will agreed to join Hannibal for the evening meal. As they walked out of the office together, Hannibal began to discuss his latest culinary creations, enticing Will with descriptions of exotic ingredients and intricate cooking techniques. Will listened intently, feeling his stomach growl in anticipation of the meal to come.

Bait.

Will stood at the bank of the river, eyeing the sparkling water with anticipation. He had been waiting for this moment all week, eager to cast his line and test his skill against the elusive fish. As he grasped his fishing pole tightly in his hand, he felt a sense of excitement wash over him. He waded slowly into the cool water, feeling the strong current tug at his legs. He knew it would take all of his strength and patience to catch a fish today, but he was determined to succeed.

As he began to cast his line, his mind wandered to the events of the past week. He had been feeling stressed and overwhelmed at work, but the serenity of the river always had a way of calming him down. He focused his attention on the rhythmic motion of his arm as he cast the line back and forth, back and forth. Suddenly, he felt a tug on the line and he knew he had hooked a fish. With a burst of adrenaline, he reeled it in, feeling a sense of triumph as he held up his catch.

Will admired the fish for a moment before carefully removing the hook and releasing it back into the water. He felt a sense of satisfaction knowing that he had caught and released a fish, rather than just catching it for sport. Winston and his other dogs gathered by the river's edge, hesitant at first to approach the rushing current. However, as they grew more comfortable with their surroundings, a few of them began to playfully frolic in the water, their paws splashing and tails wagging with glee. Will couldn't help but chuckle at the sight of their carefree antics, feeling grateful for the simple joy that their playful nature brought to his day.

As Will stood in the river, he couldn't help but let his thoughts drift to Hannibal. He tried to imagine him fishing, but it was hard to picture such a refined and elegant man engaging in such a simple activity. Hannibal was always impeccably dressed in intricate, bespoke suits that accentuated his perfect physique. Will wondered what Hannibal did in his free time when he wasn't busy being a psychiatrist and a culinary genius. Perhaps he enjoyed reading classic literature or listening to opera, or maybe he had a secret hobby that no one knew about. The more Will thought about it, the more curious he became about Hannibal's private life.

As Will pondered his interactions with the person in question, he realized that he recognized certain qualities in him that he found comforting. There was a sense of stability that seemed to emanate from him, which Will found quite soothing. He couldn't quite put his finger on what it was about this person that made him feel this way, but he suspected that it had something to do with his unflappable nature. No matter what the situation, he always seemed to remain calm and collected, which was a quality that balanced well with Will's own tendencies.

Will felt the hairs on the back of his neck stand, he realized that he was completely alone. The absence of his dogs, who were playing by the bank, seemed to have faded out. He couldn't shake the feeling that something was very wrong. The water around him started rising rapidly, and the sound of the rushing current was deafening. He tried to stay calm and think clearly, but his mind was racing with all sorts of possibilities.

With his heart pounding in his chest, he began to wade towards the riverbank. The current was stronger than he had anticipated, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to keep his footing. The water was up to his chest now, and he could feel the weight of his clothes dragging him down. Despite his best efforts, he was being swept downstream, away from the safety of the riverbank. He tried to stay calm, but panic was starting to set in. He could hear the rushing water in his ears, and it was becoming harder to breathe. He knew that he had to act fast if he wanted to survive. With all his strength, he fought against the current, pushing his way towards the riverbank. The water was now up to his neck, and he could feel himself losing his grip on reality. But he refused to give up. He could see the riverbank just a few meters away, and he knew that if he could just make it there, he would be safe.

As he waded in the water, he felt something wrap around his ankle, sending a chill up his leg. He tried to shake it off, but it only grew tighter, tugging at him with increasing force. Panic set in as he realized the water level was rising, quickly reaching his neck and then his head. He gasped for air, struggling to keep his head above water. With a final tug, he was fully submerged, and he turned to look down at his ankle. That's when he saw it - a face looking back at him. It was a fully black figure with subtle features carved into its face, and horns emerging from its head.

He frantically tried to free himself from the creature's grasp, but it held on tightly without any sign of faltering. Despite his efforts and the cold, murky water, the creature remained unresponsive. Will's lungs were screaming for air as he struggled to breathe, but it was impossible to take a breath without inhaling water. Eventually, overcome by exhaustion and pain, he stopped fighting the creature's grip. His heart was pounding so loudly that he could hear it in his ears. Suddenly, the creature reached up and cradled his face with its other arm before digging its sharp nails into Will's skin. The pain was excruciating, causing him to scream out loud and release the last of his air. The water rushed into his mouth and he began to suffocate, his body instinctively trying to breathe in the water.

As Will began to lose consciousness, his vision began to fade. The world around him became darker and more distant. His lungs ached for air, but he found himself unable to breathe. The sensation of suffocation was overwhelming, and he struggled to stay conscious. He could feel his heart pounding heavily in his chest as he tried to gasp for air. Will fought to stay awake, to keep his eyes open, but his limbs were becoming heavier and heavier. The water seemed to be pulling him down, down into a dark abyss. He closed his eyes, trying to conserve what little energy he had left.

Hannibal was humming along to Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" in his kitchen, perfectly timing his cooking as the melodic tune played in the background. He took a quick break to admire the beautiful painting of a serene countryside that hung on his kitchen wall. As he was about to return to his cooking, the phone rang, interrupting the peaceful atmosphere. He quickly dried his hands on a nearby towel and made his way to the ringing phone. Upon answering, he was surprised to hear a frantic woman's voice on the other end, speaking at a hurried pace. Hannibal listened intently, trying to discern the reason for her urgency.

“Good evening Alana,” Hannibal greeted her, his voice calm and collected.

But his demeanor quickly shifted when Alana urgently interrupted, “Hannibal, you need to get to Will's right away.”

Hannibal's posture tensed and without wasting any time, he quickly grabbed his things.

“Alana, I need you to tell me what's going on,” Hannibal said as he transferred her to the car speakers and started speeding towards Wolf Trap immediately.

Alana's voice was shaky as she spoke, “I was with Will, just catching up and we took the dogs for a walk. Applesauce ran off so I went to go and find her. I'm far away from the river and suddenly I heard Will shouting. Now all I can hear is Winston barking. I'm going as fast as I can.”

Hannibal's heart grew faster as he drove to Will's last known location.

As he pulled up to the house, he jumped out of his car and began sprinting towards the sound of Alana's voice. The ground was uneven and he stumbled a few times, but he refused to slow down. Finally, he spotted Will's body lying in the water. Hannibal's heart sank as he realized that he might be too late. He shouted to alana who was still yet to get here to call an ambulance.

Without a second thought, Hannibal waded into the water, feeling its cool embrace around his legs. He reached out blindly, his fingers searching for something, anything.

Finally, he felt a part of Will's body and pulled him towards him. Hannibal cradled Will in his arms and called out his name, hoping for any sign of life. But there was nothing. Will was limp and cold, his body drenched and heavy. Hannibal knew he had to act fast.

Carefully, he waded back to the safety of the bank, surprised at how light Will was as he carried him. Once on land, Hannibal laid Will down gently and checked for a pulse. Realizing there was none, he interlocked his fingers and placed them between Will's ribcage, starting compressions.

Alana emerged from the other side of the bank and called out to Hannibal. He didn't look up, desperately searching for any response from Will as he tried to restart his heart. "Breathe, William," he urged, putting more and more of his body weight into each push.

Alana knelt down beside the two men and watched intently as Hannibal loomed over Will, trying to save him. She couldn't help but notice how fragile Will looked in that moment, his body moving slightly against Hannibal's force. As she looked up at Hannibal, she saw a side of him that she had never seen before - his usual calm and contented nature was replaced with one of fear and determination. His hair, which was usually perfectly slicked back, was now ruffled and soggy, with strands sticking to his face.

Alana couldn't help but wonder what might happen to Will if Hannibal failed to revive him. She thought about the many moments they had shared together, the laughter and the tears. She remembered the way Will would light up when he talked about his dogs, and how he would get lost in his own thoughts when he was working on a case. She couldn't bear the thought of losing him.

As Hannibal continued to work on Will, Alana focused on the sounds around her. She heard the barking of dogs, the sound of Hannibal's breath as he worked, and the sound of her own heartbeat pounding in her chest. She knew that this was a moment that would change everything. If Will survived, their relationship would be forever altered. If he didn't, she would be left to pick up the pieces and try to move on without him.

As she sat there, watching and waiting, Alana couldn't help but think about all of the things she wished she had said to Will. All of the times she had held back because she was afraid of what he might think. She wished she had told him how much she loved him, how much he meant to her.

Suddenly will spluttered up some water, hannibal quickly turned him on his side to get it all up and the flopped back. He felt disoriented and weak. His body ached all over, and his vision was blurry. He could see Hannibal's worried face hovering over him.

Will nodded, feeling grateful for Hannibal's presence. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath, trying to calm his racing heart. As he lay there, he couldn't help but think about how close he had come to death. His mind replayed the terrifying images of being trapped underwater, unable to breathe. He shuddered at the thought of what might have happened if Hannibal hadn't arrived in time.

Slowly, Will's vision began to clear, and he could see Alana sitting nearby, tears still streaming down her face. He felt a pang of guilt, knowing that he had caused her so much worry. "I'm sorry," he whispered, his voice barely audible.

Alana looked up at him, her eyes red and swollen. "Don't be silly," she said, her voice choked with emotion. "We're just glad you're okay."

Will nodded, feeling a sense of relief wash over him. He looked around, taking in his surroundings. He saw his dogs, wagging their tails excitedly, and he smiled weakly. "Hey guys," he said, his voice still raspy.

His dogs crowded around him, licking his face and wagging their tails. Will laughed weakly, feeling grateful for their love and affection. He looked up at Hannibal, who was still hovering nearby, his expression one of concern.

"How did you find me?" Will asked, his voice still hoarse.

Hannibal's face softened, and he sat down beside Will. "Alana called me," he said, his voice gentle. "I came as fast as I could."

Will nodded, feeling grateful for Hannibal's quick thinking. He looked up at Hannibal, his eyes filled with gratitude. "Thank you," he said, his voice barely above a whisper.

As will laid there he started to recount the events that had just transpired, his memory foggy. His thinking was interrupted.

“William, did you do this on purpose?” Hannibal asked, his voice low and dangerous, his eyes fixed on Will's face. Will's brow furrowed in confusion, and he stumbled over his

response, unsure of how to answer. For a moment, there was silence between them, broken only by the sound of their breathing. “No, no.. I don't remember, there was something in there with me, the water just got the best of me. the current.” Will said, his voice trembling.

Hannibal listened carefully, his eyes scanning the river. It was a serene sight, with the water flowing steadily and a few fish swimming around. As he analyzed Will's words, he couldn't help but wonder if this was another episode. The evidence seemed to suggest that it was true, and Hannibal knew that he had to tread carefully.

After a few moments of silence, Hannibal spoke up. "Do you remember anything else, Will? Anything at all that might help us figure out what happened?"

Will shook his head, his expression troubled. "No, that's all I remember. It all happened so fast."

Hannibal nodded, his gaze still fixed on the river. "Alright.”

Alana quickly jumped up, her attention being grabbed the blaring of the sirens. she ran over to direct the ambulance to the right location. Meanwhile, Hannibal remained steadfastly by Will's side, despite the commotion and the chaos around them. As the ambulance arrived, Hannibal assisted the EMTs in attending to Will's needs, providing them with crucial information about his medical history. The journey to the hospital was a blur of lights and sounds, with Hannibal holding Will's hand tightly, offering words of comfort and encouragement. Alana trailed behind the ambulance, her heart racing with fear and worry. She prayed that Will would be okay.

Lanius ludovicianus.

Chapter Summary

Will stays in the hospital for a few days and notices his growing feelings for Hannibal. As he prepares to leave the hospital, Will is nervous about returning to his normal life and confronting his emotions. He eventually agrees to a dinner invitation from Hannibal, but is unsure about how to proceed with his newfound feelings.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

After the unfortunate incident, Will found himself spending a few days in the hospital. It was a much needed break for him, allowing him to recuperate both physically and mentally. Although he didn't have any major physical injuries that required constant attention, his mental state was quite fragile. Fortunately, he seemed to be sleeping much better than he had been prior to the incident.

During his stay, Will used the time to catch up on some much needed rest. He found himself dozing off most days, allowing his body and mind to fully recover. Even though he was confined to his hospital room, he was able to find some peace in the silence and solitude.

Hannibal was a constant presence during his stay, offering his support and comfort whenever possible. Alana, on the other hand, made only a few scattered appearances. Will didn't mind too much, knowing that she had her hands full with his beloved dogs, which he knew could be a handful. Despite this, he was grateful for her help and knew that his furry friends were in good hands.

As his physical and mental health improved, Will began to feel restless. He knew that he couldn't stay cooped up in the hospital forever, and he was anxious to get back to his life. But he couldn't shake the feeling that something was off.

Will kept recounting the events. He and Hannibal had spent countless hours discussing the matter, analyzing every detail of Will's behavior and mental state. Ultimately, they arrived at the conclusion that Will had been consumed by the intense stress of his work, causing it to take on a physical form. This wasn't the first time they had encountered such an occurrence, and Hannibal was confident that with the right approach, they could help Will overcome this obstacle and regain his peace of mind. It was clear that he needed their support now more than ever, and they were ready to provide it.

It was finally the day that Will would be discharged from the hospital. After spending what felt like an eternity in the hospital bed, he was eagerly waiting for the doctor to give him the

all clear. He couldn't wait to see his beloved dogs, who he had missed terribly during his stay in the hospital.

As he was waiting, Will couldn't help but feel anxious. He had never been in the hospital before and the thought of going back home was both exciting and nerve-wracking at the same time. Finally, a doctor knocked on his door and handed him the discharge forms. The doctor took the time to explain some things to Will about his recovery process and what he should and shouldn't do.

Despite the doctor's instructions, Will was more focused on getting the paperwork done so he could finally leave the hospital. As he signed the forms, he couldn't help but feel a sense of relief wash over him. He was finally going home, back to his normal routine, and most importantly, back to his furry companions who had been eagerly waiting for him. As he gathered his things, he couldn't help but feel grateful for the care and attention he had received while in the hospital. Will smiled as he thought about Hannibal. He couldn't help but feel an array of emotions coursing through him. As he felt his cheeks flush, he turned his head up and looked at himself in the reflection in the window. He was taken aback by his own reaction. He stood there, staring blankly and feeling his mind empty of all thoughts. The silence in the room was deafening as he struggled to make sense of his feelings. Suddenly, he remembered the first time they had met, and how Hannibal had made him feel special. Will couldn't believe how much Hannibal had affected him, and he couldn't wait to see him again.

Will sat down on his bed, trying to shake off the feeling that had been nagging at him all week. He was a smart man, prone to denial, but he couldn't ignore the truth any longer. He had been experiencing a series of confusing emotions, and it was only now that he had finally recognized what they meant: he had a crush on Hannibal. It wasn't something he had ever expected or even imagined, but the more he thought about it, the more it made sense. Hannibal was intelligent, charming, and always seemed to know what to say to make Will feel at ease. As he sat there contemplating his newfound feelings, Will couldn't help but wonder what Hannibal's reaction would be if he ever found out.

Will's thoughts were interrupted by the sudden sound of his phone buzzing. He picked it up and saw that it was Hannibal calling. His heart skipped a beat as he answered the call. Hannibal's voice was soothing and reassuring, and Will couldn't help but feel a sense of calm wash over him. They talked for a while, and as the conversation came to an end, Hannibal mentioned that he wanted to take Will out to dinner to celebrate his discharge from the hospital. Will couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement at the prospect of spending more time with Hannibal outside of work. He agreed to the dinner invitation, feeling grateful for the chance to spend some quality time with Hannibal and get to know him better.

As Will hung up the phone, he couldn't shake off the feeling that something was off. He had a nagging suspicion that Hannibal was more than just a friend or a colleague, but he couldn't be sure. He decided to put his feelings aside for the time being, focusing instead on his recovery and the upcoming dinner with Hannibal. Will couldn't help but feel a sense of nervousness as he prepared for the dinner, wondering if he was ready to confront his feelings for Hannibal.

The journey home was a silent one. The air was heavy with the weight of unspoken words. Alana, seeing the quiet sorrow in his face, offered him a ride. She knew he didn't want to go

home alone. As they drove through the darkened streets, the streetlights casting shadows on the car, she couldn't help but feel a sense of unease. The silence was almost deafening, and she wondered what was going through his mind. She tried to start a conversation, but the words felt forced and stilted. Finally, they arrived at his house. He thanked her for the ride and got out of the car. She watched him walk up to his front door, the sadness almost palpable.

As she stood by her car, staring at the entrance of the building where Will had just entered, she contemplated whether or not to follow him. Though Will enjoyed his personal space, she knew that sometimes it was better to be in each other's company. She took a hesitant step forward, the memory of what had happened at the river still fresh in her mind. She thought about the way the sun had shone down on the water, the gentle breeze that had ruffled his wet hair, and the way her heart had raced when Will had taken a breath. She wondered if he would be okay if she left. As she weighed her options, she realized that the decision would have to be made sooner or later.

As Will entered his house, he was greeted by the excited barks of his dogs. They had missed him terribly during his stay at the hospital and were eager to show their love and affection. Will couldn't help but smile as he petted them, feeling grateful for their unwavering loyalty and support. The dinner with Hannibal was just around the corner, and he couldn't help but feel a sense of nervous anticipation.

Will stood in front of his turn table, a smile forming on his lips as he gazed at the rows of neatly organized records. He reached out, his fingers lightly grazing the spines until he found the one he was searching for. Gently pulling it out, he placed it on the turn table and watched as it began to spin.

As the music filled the room, Will closed his eyes, letting the vibrations wash over him. He could feel his body responding to the rhythm, his toes tapping along to the beat. With a contented sigh, he ran his fingers through his hair and made his way towards his bed, the music still playing in the background.

Will was relieved to finally be back in his own home. He couldn't help but smile as he threw himself onto his bed, feeling the familiar comfort of his mattress and pillows. He wrapped himself in the clean sheets, taking a deep breath to appreciate the fresh scent that filled his nostrils. He wondered who had washed them - it must have been Alana. She always seemed to know what he needed, even before he did.

As Will started to drift off to sleep, he couldn't help but think about how much he had missed being in his own space. He felt grateful for the peace and quiet that enveloped him, allowing him to relax and recharge. He turned on some music, letting it fade into the background as he let his mind wander.

The fact that he was able to sleep through the night, which was a rare occurrence, was quite surprising. It was a hope he had that it would continue, as he knew that his issues were only exacerbated by his lack of sleep.

As he slowly opened his eyes, he realized that something was off. He looked around the room, and then it hit him - he had woken up by himself, without the help of his trusty alarm

clock. A wave of panic washed over him as he realized that he had slept through the ringing of his alarm entirely.

As he got up from the bed, his dogs - who had been peacefully snoozing beside him - immediately jumped up in excitement, their tails wagging wildly. He greeted them with a smile, happy to see how happy they were to see him.

He quickly reached for the clothes he had prepared the night before, and threw them on. He knew that he was running late, he thought for a minute, he could afford to skip breakfast. Given the circumstances, he knew that people would be worried about his absence, and he didn't want to cause any undue concern.

Chapter End Notes

srry for anyone who noticed the issue when i first posted the capter, had to take it down for a bit but here!! all good now.

Hallways.

Chapter Summary

Will returns to work, his co workers show concern.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Jack watched as Will's car arrived, surprised to see him back already. It had only been a day since wills discharge.

As Will got out of the car, Jack couldn't help but wonder if he was pushing himself too hard. He knew that Will was a capable detective, but he also knew that he had a tendency to overwork himself. Jack had seen it before, and he didn't want to see Will burn himself out.

But he also knew that they had a job to do. They were both committed to solving the case, and they needed each other's help to do it. So, he decided not to say anything about it for now. He would approach the matter later, when they had more time to talk.

In the meantime, while the two men stood in silence, Will searching for the right words to say, Jack broke the tension with a warm smile accompanied by a firm handshake. "Good to see you back," he said in a welcoming tone. Will's smile was forced, a hollow imitation of a genuine expression, and he hesitated before returning the handshake, his mind preoccupied with thoughts of the past and the case at hand.

“Will?” a voice called out behind him, beckoning his attention. He turned around to see his colleague, Beverly, walking towards him, the sound of her heels clicking against the polished floors echoed throughout the work space.

"Hey Beverly," Will answered, genuinely pleased to see her. They often worked together on projects and he appreciated her creative input and attention to detail. As they exchanged pleasantries, Will couldn't help but notice how Beverly's bright smile lit up her face. He wondered if she had just come from a successful meeting.

"What's the smile for?" he asked, noticing the grin on her face. She looked at him with confusion, as if the answer was obvious. Will's expression showed that he wasn't sure of the answer to his question.

"I'm glad to see you, obviously. You almost died, and I'm relieved to see you're better," she said with a smile. She gazed at Will for a moment, taking in his appearance. His unkempt hair and casual outfit made him look ruggedly handsome.

Will noticed her gaze and felt a pang in his chest. He took a step back and pushed his glasses up, trying to maintain his composure. The answer shocked him; he couldn't understand why he was causing her joy. Throughout his life, he had always found it difficult to comprehend the ways in which others cared for him. This was a recurring issue that he constantly grappled with, as he struggled to decipher the nuances of human emotions and the subtle signs of affection that others displayed towards him. Despite his efforts to better understand this facet of human nature, he continued to feel uncertain and uneasy about the extent to which he was valued and appreciated by those around him.

Will felt a sense of elation as he returned to work after his time off, eager to resume his routine. He effortlessly slipped back into his work rhythm, pouring all his energy into his tasks. The hours of the day seemed to pass by in a blur, and he found himself fully immersed in his work, his mind racing with ideas and possibilities. As he sat on one of the benches near Jack's office, engrossed in reading a file, he was completely oblivious to the world around him. It wasn't until someone cleared their throat next to him that he snapped out of his trance. It was Bev, one of his colleagues. Will flashed her a smile, feeling a sense of contentment wash over him. He closed the file gently, ready to engage in conversation and connect with his co-worker.

"Listen, Will," Beverly said firmly, her eyes locked onto his. "I respect you. I think we've known each other long enough that we can be honest with each other." Will tilted his head in confusion, wondering where Beverly was going with this.

"What happened at the river--" Beverly began, but Will cut her off, his voice tight with anxiety. "Beverly, no, I don't--"

Beverly looked at Will with concern. "No, Will, please let me finish," she said, leaning in closer. "I've been hearing rumors and whispers. Some people are talking about what happened at the river. They're wondering if you're okay, or if something's been bothering you. You know, I don't want you to think that you can't come to me if you need to talk about anything. I'm here for you, and I know that our line of work can be isolating. I don't have much of a social life myself, so I'm never too busy to lend an ear or a shoulder to cry on, if that's what you need."
Will gazed at her intently, his eyebrows furrowed in confusion. He was taken aback by her sudden outburst and didn't quite know how to react. As he pondered over her words, a myriad of thoughts raced through his mind, each one more perplexing than the last. He couldn't help but wonder if he had missed something important, something that could have triggered this unexpected reaction.

"I'm not entirely sure what you mean," he muttered, looking down at his feet. "I'm fine, though, Beverley. I've just been feeling a bit overwhelmed lately with work and all. " He paused, taking a deep breath before continuing. "I - I just want you to know that I didn't try to kill myself. That's not what this is about. I know it might have seemed that way, but I promise you, it's not. I just had an episode or something."

"Oh thank god," Bev sighed loudly with relief. She placed a gentle hand on Will's arm, hoping to comfort him in some small way. Will, however, was not one for physical contact and stiffened at her touch, his face scrunched up in discomfort. Even though they were close

friends, she knew to respect his boundaries and quickly withdrew her hand. She slowly rose to her feet, picking off a piece of fluff that landed on her sleeve. It was clear to her that Will wasn't in the mood for any long, drawn-out conversations at the moment. Despite this, she felt compelled to make her presence known. She took a deep breath and began to speak, her words coming out in a gentle, reassuring tone.

"Listen, Will. I just want you to know that I'm here for you. Whatever you're going through, I want you to know that you don't have to go through it alone. We were all really worried about you, you know."

She paused for a moment, giving Will a chance to respond. When he remained silent, she continued.

"I know you don't like to talk about your feelings, but it's important that you know that we care about you. We want to help you in any way that we can. So please, if there's anything you need, just let us know."

She smiled at him, hoping that her words had managed to provide some comfort. Despite the seriousness of the situation, she couldn't help but feel a glimmer of hope. Perhaps, with time, Will would open up to her.

Chapter End Notes

this is one of those chapters i wish id done better but exciting chapter coming. weeee, angsty hannibal coming!! im so excited.

Metal.

Chapter Summary

a tense encounter between Will and Hannibal. hannibal is exposed.

It was just another day of work for Will, the monotony of his routine having become constricting. Despite his exhaustion, he still couldn't sleep at night, tormented by the same recurring nightmares. He found himself lost in a blur of days, each one blurring into the next with no end in sight. As he stared out the window, he couldn't help but feel a sense of emptiness. He had zoned out in the middle of the conversation between him, Jack, and Beverly. He couldn't help but feel guilty for not fully engaging in their discussion about their upcoming case. He took a deep breath, trying to clear his mind and refocus. As he exhaled, he allowed himself return to reality.

Will surveyed the room, taking in his surroundings with a cautious eye. As he looked around, he couldn't help but notice that someone was missing. Turning to the others, he posed the question that had been weighing on his mind. "Is Hannibal coming?" he asked, the worry clear in his voice. It had been a few days since they were last together, but it felt like an eternity since he had last seen his friend. Despite the short time that had passed, Will could feel the absence of Hannibal growing in his mind, a nagging sense of worry that refused to be quelled. As he waited for an answer, his thoughts drifted to the many times that Hannibal had been there for him, a constant presence in his life through thick and thin. Will couldn't help but wonder where he was now, and what he was doing. Was he thinking of him too? As the seconds ticked by, Will's trepidation mounted, the silence in the room almost palpable in its intensity.

“Not today, I got a call from him yesterday.” Jack replied, neither of his co workers would understand the impact this would have on Will. Hannibal was the most reliable person Will knew, and the fact that he had missed work was cause for alarm. A sense of unease settled in Will's stomach as he tried to think of all the possible reasons for Hannibal's absence. Was he sick? Did something happen to him or someone he cared about? The possibilities seemed endless and each one more unsettling than the last.

“Yesterday?” Will's anxiety grew with each passing moment. Hannibal rarely missed work, he was rarely absent. The fact that he hadn't heard from him in over a day was cause for concern. “Well, why? Where is he?” Will's voice was laced with worry and fear. He couldn't bear the thought of something happening to Hannibal. Jack sighed. He hesitated before answering, not wanting to add to Will's mounting anxiety.

"I'm not sure, Will. But don't worry, I'm sure he's fine. He doesn't need to be here for this anyway. Let's focus on the case at hand," Jack tried to reassure Will. However, the words felt hollow to him.

Will acknowledged that his fear was irrational and that Hannibal was probably unharmed. Despite this, Will's emotions got the best of him, causing him to panic. Perhaps it was due to his heightened sensitivity to danger, honed from years of hunting killers. Regardless of the cause, Will couldn't shake the feeling of dread that consumed him, even as he tried to rationalise it away. Will decided it was in his best interest to finish his part of the case as quickly as possible. However, he couldn't help but worry about Hannibal's well-being. Even though they had dinner plans several days away, he couldn't ignore his worry for Hannibal. Will had been thinking about Hannibal a lot lately.

He would often find himself daydreaming about Hannibal's culinary creations and the way his hands moved so expertly in the kitchen. Will would get lost in thought while imagining the taste and aroma of the food that Hannibal prepared with such passion and precision. He couldn't help but smile when he thought of how Hannibal always seemed to know exactly what would make him happy. As Will's thoughts drifted to Hannibal's physical appearance, he couldn't help but notice how perfectly Hannibal's suits shaped to his figure. It was almost as if they had been made just for him. Will had never met anyone who exuded such confidence and elegance in their appearance. Despite all of these thoughts and feelings, Will was unsure if Hannibal felt the same way. He longed to express his feelings to Hannibal, but he feared that it could ruin their friendship. Will couldn't bear the thought of losing Hannibal altogether, so he remained quiet and kept his feelings to himself.

Will quickly finished up with his colleagues, eager to get back to his car. The walk through the hallways provided him with a chance to fidget with his keys and release some of the stress that had built up throughout the day. He unlocked the car and slid into the driver's seat, tapping the center console to pull up Hannibal's contact information. As he started the car and began to drive away, his phone began to ring. Each ring caused his ears to prick up, hoping that Hannibal would answer the call. The sound of the ringing filled the car, bouncing off the walls and reminding Will of the many times he and Hannibal had driven together.

The cacophonous ringing of his phone was so loud and persistent that it seemed to go on forever. As the line went through to voicemail, he hit the steering wheel with his hands in frustration. However, he knew it wouldn't be long before he arrived at Hannibals.

As he turned into Hannibal's road, he felt the familiar bumps and turns under the wheels of his vehicle. He had driven down this road countless times before, but this time it felt different. As he parked his car next to Hannibal's, he couldn't help but notice that there was no movement from within the house. He hesitated for a moment before getting out of the car and walking towards the front door, his heart pounding in his chest.

Will knocked on the door, somewhat loudly. He waited for a response, but no answer came. He had been away for a while and was eager to get inside his house. Will knew that his front room was usually left in a specific way, and he could see that nothing had changed from the window. Even though there were no lights on inside, he could still make out the usual setting. He decided to walk around to the other side of the house and look through the kitchen window. To his surprise, he saw that a few items were strewn around, including some knives and pans left out. This was highly unusual due to Hannibal's clean nature. Will became increasingly worried and wondered if something had happened to his friend. He considered

calling the police, but decided against it for the time being. He needed to investigate further before making any decisions.

Will walked back to the door and knocked harder, his frustration growing with each passing moment. He took a few steps back to look up at the top windows, his heart racing with anticipation. As he waited for a response, he let out a loud huff and ran both his hands through his hair, trying to calm his nerves. He couldn't help but wonder what was taking so long, and whether anyone was even home.

Out of frustration, Will grabbed the door handle and jiggled it, surprised when it turned easily in his hand. He hesitated for a moment, wondering if he should really go in. What if he wasn't welcome? What if he wasn't supposed to be there? But then again, what other options did he have? What if he was in trouble.

With a deep breath, Will pushed the door open and stepped into the house. As he walked through the familiar halls, he couldn't help but feel a sense of unease. The silence was almost deafening, broken only by the sound of his footsteps on the hardwood floors. He called out Hannibal's name, but there was no response. Will continued through the house, searching for any signs of Hannibal's whereabouts. As Will gazed up at Hannibal's towering staircase, he couldn't help but feel small and insignificant. The weight of his choices bore down on him, threatening to overwhelm him. He knew that he had to make a decision, but the thought of it filled him with dread. Every possible outcome seemed to have its own set of daunting consequences. Would he regret this decision? Would Hannibal be mad at him? These were the questions that plagued him as he stood there, staring up at the imposing staircase.

As he started down the first step, he got stuck in his mind, suddenly transported back to when he was younger. He remembered sitting on his parents' steps, listening to them argue. It was a familiar sound to him, one that he had grown accustomed to over the years. As he stood there, the memories flooded back to him, overwhelming him with a sense of nostalgia and longing.
He remembered the way his mother's voice would rise and fall as she argued with his father, the way she would plead with him to understand her point of view. He also remembered his father's stoic silence, his refusal to engage in the argument, even when it was clear that he was in the wrong. It was a dynamic that he had never quite understood, but one that had left a lasting impression on him nonetheless.
As he stood there on the staircase, lost in his memories, he couldn't help but wonder how different things might have been if his parents had been able to work through their issues and did the things they did to him. Maybe he wouldn't be stuck in his own mind, unable to move forward. Maybe he would have learned better coping mechanisms, ones that didn't involve getting lost in his own thoughts. But alas, those were just dreams, and he was left to face the harsh reality of his current situation alone.

He took a hesitant step forward, his chest rising and falling rapidly with each ragged breath. His worried expression was etched deep into his face. He paused, looking around the dimly lit room, feeling the weight of the silence. He took another step, then another, and soon he was jogging up the stairs quietly. As he reached the top, he saw a faint light coming from a doorway, a door slightly ajar. His heart pounding in his chest, he approached the door slowly, trying to keep his footsteps as quiet as possible. He was relieved to see the light growing

brighter, and he could hear a faint sound coming from within. As he peered through the crack in the door, he could see a shadow moving on the ground, and he knew it was Hannibal. Hannibal emerged from the room, his hand in a tight grip on the door, his expression unreadable. The tension in the air was palpable as they faced each other, neither one speaking a word.

Will stared up to Hannibal who was looming in the doorway in front of him. Hannibal was wearing an impeccably tailored suit, the kind that suggested he had spent a small fortune on it. It was a dark shade of blue that complemented his piercing eyes. Hannibal had a strand of hair flicking out the front of his hairline, the end resting below his eyebrow, fluttering against his eyelashes. His eyes were fixed on Will's face, studying his expression with a keen interest. Will felt a sudden surge of nervousness, unsure of what was to come. He shifted his weight from one foot to the other, trying to find a comfortable stance, but he still felt off balance. Hannibal's presence was like a force of nature, commanding and powerful, and Will couldn't help but feel overwhelmed by it. The two men stood in silence still, the air around them thick with tension. Hannibal Lecter was partially concealed by the wall and the shadow cast by the light, making it difficult for Will to get a clear read on him. As Will's eyes adjusted, he tried to decipher Hannibal's thoughts. A metallic smell lingered in the air, almost imperceptible beneath Hannibal's familiar scent. Will recognised the odour, but couldn't quite put his finger on what it was. Sensing his own discomfort, he let his gaze wander downward, taking in Hannibal's slightly undone shirt and the waistcoat that sat apart, rather than fastened in its usual neat manner. As they stood there, the silence between them seemed to stretch on forever, each man lost in his own thoughts and trying to anticipate the other's next move.

As Will stood there, he couldn't help but notice the firm grip of Hannibal's hand on the side of the door, the tendons visible and the veins spreading down to his arm. It was as though Hannibal was trying to exert his dominance over the situation, making it clear that he was in control. Will's gaze continued down, taking in the details of Hannibal's clothing - the sharp cut of his suit, the sheen of his shoes. His eyes skipped from his hips to his thighs. He couldn't help but feel a sense of unease in Hannibal's presence, yet he was also drawn to him, compelled by the enigmatic aura that surrounded him. It was a strange mix of emotions that left Will feeling both intrigued and unnerved.

Will drew his eyes back up, locking them with Hannibal's. The two men remained in a long, tense silence, both studying the other's face intently. Will couldn't help but notice a glaze over Hannibal's eyes. As Will pondered this, he became acutely aware of the sound of the clock ticking on the wall behind him. The seconds seemed to stretch on into infinity, each one filled with an unspoken tension that hung heavy in the air.

It was as though Hannibal was studying him, trying to unravel the secrets of his soul. Will couldn't help but feel exposed under his gaze, as though his every thought was laid bare for Hannibal to see. Despite the unease that he felt, Will couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement at the prospect of Hannibal delving deeper into his psyche. It was a feeling that he couldn't quite explain, but one that left him feeling both apprehensive and exhilarated at the same time.

Will slowly took a step closer to Hannibal, analyzing his every move with an intense focus. Hannibal, sensing Will's proximity, adjusted his head higher, his eyes piercing into Will's. For

a moment, there was a tense silence between them, until Will noticed a flicker of an emotion he had never seen on his friend's face before. Fear. It was an unexpected reaction from Hannibal, whose usual confident demeanor seemed to falter under Will's gaze. Will couldn't help but wonder what could have caused such an unusual behavior from his friend, and he felt a twinge of concern for Hannibal's well-being. In that moment, as they stood there in silence, Will noticed a striking similarity between the two of them. They were both vulnerable, exposed and at the mercy of each other. Will couldn't help but feel a twinge of something more than just admiration for Hannibal. He felt a strange and unexpected attraction towards him, a pull that he couldn't quite explain. He thought about the events that had led up to this encounter, and the decisions that they had each made along the way. As he reflected on the situation, he realized that there was more to this moment than just a chance meeting. Perhaps there was a bigger purpose at play, or maybe it was just a coincidence. Either way, Will knew that he felt something special towards Hannibal, something that he had never felt before.

He felt a sense of comfort in Hannibal's presence, as though he had finally found someone who understood him. Will couldn't help but wonder if Hannibal felt the same way, if he too was experiencing this intense connection that seemed to be growing stronger by the second.

As they stood there in silence, Will's mind wandered to thoughts of Hannibal. He couldn't help but admire the way that his suit fit him so perfectly, the way that his hair fell in waves around his face. He found himself drawn to Hannibal's piercing gaze, unable to look away from his intense stare. Will felt a desire growing inside of him, a longing to be closer to Hannibal, to explore this connection that he was feeling. It was a feeling that he couldn't quite explain, but one that left him feeling both exhilarated and apprehensive at the same time. He found himself drawn closer to Hannibal, his body moving of its own accord, as though pulled by some invisible force.

Their breathing was synchronous, their chests moving at the same time. It was as if they were in perfect harmony, two halves of a whole. The only sound that could be heard was the gentle rise and fall of their breaths.

As Will and Hannibal stood there, their bodies just inches apart, the tension between them grew palpable. Will's heart was racing, his mind awhirl with conflicting emotions. He couldn't help but feel drawn to Hannibal, his every instinct urging him to take a step closer. Hannibal's gaze was intense, his eyes seeming to bore into Will's very soul. It was as though he could see everything that Will was thinking and feeling, every doubt and fear that had been plaguing him for so long. Despite the fear and uncertainty that he felt, Will couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement at the prospect of exploring this connection between them. It was a feeling that he had never experienced before, and one that he couldn't quite explain. As they stood there in silence, Will couldn't help but wonder what would happen next, and where this intense attraction would lead them.

Hannibal was a highly strategic and calculated individual who always seemed to know the best course of action to take in any given situation. He was a mastermind who could foresee potential obstacles and plan accordingly. However, even someone as skilled as Hannibal was not immune to being caught off guard. In such situations, Hannibal would have to quickly

reassess the situation and make adjustments on the fly, a task that was not always easy for him. He was in that situation now.

As Will took a deep breath, his nose immediately flooded with that same metallic smell. The scent buried itself deep in his nose this time, causing his eyes to flicker in recognition. It was blood. It was a thick, warm, and pungent smell that made his stomach churn. Usually, such things wouldn't have bothered him, but given the context, Will was alarmed. His eyes started darting around, trying to locate the source of the smell. He wondered why he smelt it more the closer he got to Hannibal. He knew that Hannibal had a heightened sense of smell, so whatever it was, Hannibal knew about it. This shot concern through Will.

He attempted to peer through the doorway and into the room that Hannibal had previously occupied. However, this task was made increasingly difficult considering Hannibal's current state of being, as he was neither fully inside nor outside of the room. Despite the challenge, the individual persisted in their efforts to gain a better view of the room's interior. Will didn’t know what he would find but he needed to know. Hannibal realized what Will was doing. He could see the determination in Will's eyes. Hannibal swiftly pulled the door closer to him, effectively blocking Will's view. Hannibal's gaze intensified as he watched Will's reaction. The tension in the room was palpable, and Hannibal could sense that Will was not going to back down. Hannibal knew that he had to be careful with his next move. He had to stay one step ahead of Will, or else he would lose this battle of wits.

The two men stood there, silent and tense. Though no words were spoken, their unspoken communication was clear. Will's hand slowly reached out towards the door, his fingers hovering over the wooden pannels. Hannibal's eyes locked onto Will's hand. The two men were caught in a mental struggle, each vying for control over the door.

Will's gaze never left Hannibal's face, his expression silently begging Hannibal to release his grip on the door. Hannibal's eyes narrowed, his grip tightening as he locked eyes with Will. The tension in the room was thick, the air filled with an unspoken challenge.

As the seconds ticked by, Will's face contorted in a silent plea. Hannibal remained firm, his jaw set and unyielding. It was a battle of wills, neither man willing to back down.

Finally, after a moment of contemplation, Will decided to extend his hand and placed it gently on Hannibal's hand. He ran his fingers over its features, taking in the texture and warmth. Hannibal leaned forward, allowing Will to explore his hand with caution, but also with a sense of freedom. Will knew that this gesture was a calculated risk, but he couldn't help but feel that it was worth it. As he continued to caress Hannibal's hand, he felt a sense of connection and intimacy that he had never experienced before. Will, with a confidence that betrayed his certainty, knew exactly what he was doing. As he approached Hannibal, he sensed the man's vulnerability and used it to his advantage. Pushing past him, Will wedged himself between Hannibal and the door that the man was so eager to keep shut. As he did so, he couldn't help but feel a rush of adrenaline, his heart racing faster than he ever thought possible. He knew that this was a pivotal moment.

Hannibal took a step back, his gaze never leaving Will's face. He knew that he had underestimated the man in front of him, and he couldn't help but feel a sense of respect for Will's cunning and intelligence. Hannibal had always prided himself on his ability to

outsmart his opponents, but he had met his match in Will. As he stood there, he couldn't help but wonder what other surprises Will had in store for him.
Will, for his part, remained calm and collected. He had anticipated Hannibal's reaction, and he was prepared for whatever came next. He knew that he had taken a risk by entering Hannibal's office uninvited, but he was confident that he could handle whatever Hannibal threw his way. As he looked around the room, he couldn't help but feel a sense of awe at the wealth of knowledge and culture that Hannibal had amassed. The bookshelves were filled with volumes on art, literature, and history, each one a treasure trove of information waiting to be explored. Will couldn't help but feel a sense of envy at the thought of having access to such a vast collection of knowledge.

His desk was positioned in the center of the spacious room, which was brightly illuminated by an elegant antique lamp that adorned the desk's surface. As Will approached the desk, a metallic glint caught his eye, prompting him to investigate further. As he drew closer, he noticed that the glint was coming from a set of knives laid out neatly and organized on Hannibal's desk. The desk itself was made of dark wood and had a subtle yet alluring aroma of mahogany emanating from it. A dark towel was laid beneath the knives, but it was not fully unwrapped, leaving Will to wonder what other secrets Hannibal might be hiding. With a sense of intrigue, he stepped closer, his mind racing with questions about the enigmatic man who stood behind him.

Will reached out to grab the corner of the towel and flip it over, revealing what it held inside. As he unfolded the towel, he noticed that it contained a few handkerchiefs, each one stained red. The stains on the handkerchiefs blended in with the faint but unmissable stains on the towel.

Will noticed Hannibal's sharp intake of breath and turned to face him fully. Hannibal stood against the wall, his body slightly turned away, hiding part of himself. Will felt a rush of emotions, but he refused to show fear. He studied Hannibal's face, noting the small creases around his eyes and mouth. Will wondered what Hannibal was thinking, why he couldn't meet his gaze. This was the first time Will had known Hannibal to deliberately avoid eye contact. It was strange, as Hannibal was known for his piercing gaze and his ability to read people through their eyes. Will wondered if this was a sign of something deeper going on with Hannibal. As Will stared at Hannibal, he caught a glimpse of something shiny and red, concealed in the shadow. Straining his eyes, he could see a single droplet of red liquid falling from the man standing before him, despite the man's best efforts to keep it hidden. Will's mind raced with questions.

Will's approach towards Hannibal was marked with a palpable sense of unease. He tried to initiate eye contact, but Hannibal continued to avert his gaze, deep in thought. As Will drew closer, he couldn't help but notice the tension in Hannibal's jaw and the way his arm muscles were flexed, as if he was bracing for something. With a deep breath, Will extended an arm out and hesitantly touched Hannibal's waist, his hand sliding round his waist above his hip. Hannibal finally returned the eye contact, and Will let his hand sit there for a moment, feeling the warmth of Hannibal's body through his clothes. After observing Hannibal's eyes for a moment, with a slight nod, Will closed his eyes. Will extended his fingers out to search for Hannibal's arm, and when he found it, he gently pulled it towards him, almost as if he was seeking comfort from Hannibal's touch. The silence between them was heavy, as if pregnant

with unspoken words and emotions that neither of them wanted to voice. Finally, Hannibal broke the silence, his voice barely above a whisper, "Will..." Will could feel the weight of the moment, the tension between them tense. He knew that Hannibal had something important to say, but he was hesitant to do so. But Will didn't need Hannibal to say anything. He understood the depth of their connection, the bond that had been forged between them. He opened his eyes and reconnected his gaze with Hannibal's, still holding his arm in his hands. He wanted to reassure Hannibal, to let him know that he trusted him completely.

Will slowly traced his fingers down Hannibal's wrist, already knowing what he would find. As he looked down, he saw a few crimson slices that had taken shape along Hannibal's wrist. They were uniform and organized, as if Hannibal had been doing this for some time. Will felt a mixture of surprise and sadness. He had never expected his own psychiatrist to be guilty of self-harm. He wondered what could have driven Hannibal to do this to himself.

Will felt a pang of guilt. They stood there for a moment longer, two broken men leaning on each other for support. Will quickly turned and grabbed one of the nearby kerchiefs, which he then wrapped tightly around Hannibal's arm before applying firm pressure. He could feel the heat emanating from the wound as he worked to staunch the flow of blood. As they gazed at each other, their silence seemed to stretch on for an eternity. They were both deep in thought, trying to come to terms with the situation that had brought them together. The soothing atmosphere between them and neither of them dared to speak for fear of breaking the fragile peace that had settled between them.

Will reluctantly followed Hannibal to his guest room. Hannibal, with his usual poise, offered him the room for the night, but Will's mind was set on something else. He politely refused to leave and instead suggested they discuss the matter which weighed on them heavily. As he sat down on the bed, he couldn't help but notice how immaculate the room was. The opulent decor, the extravagant paintings and the subtle fragrance of lavender and sandalwood, all added to the ambiance of the room. It was a stark contrast to Will's house.

After Hannibal wished him goodnight, he walked to his own room, which was down the hallway from Will's. The silence hung heavy in the air as they parted ways, each lost in their own thoughts. Hannibal couldn't help but think about the feeling he had since their encounter earlier that evening. He wondered if Will felt the same way or if he was simply tired after the long day they had. As he undressed, Hannibal couldn't shake off the feeling that there was something more to Will's actions, the connection they shared. Meanwhile, Will lay in his bed, his mind racing with thoughts and emotions that he couldn't quite make sense of. He replayed the encounter with Hannibal over and over again in his head, trying to understand the hidden meanings behind his movements.

Moonlight.

Chapter Summary

Following Will's thoughts and interactions with Hannibal, he grapples with his growing attraction to the enigmatic man. As they walk through a moonlit landscape, Will wonders if Hannibal reciprocates his feelings, and they discuss their struggles and past experiences.

Will smiled to himself as he looked around Hannibal's house, taking in the new surroundings. It was the first time he had stayed here, and he couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement mixed with a hint of apprehension. He took a deep breath, savouring the scent of Hannibal that seemed to permeate every inch of the space. As he walked around, he couldn't help but notice the intricate details of the decor, from the ornate furniture to the delicate artwork hanging on the walls. It was clear that Hannibal had a great appreciation for beauty and had spared no expense in creating a space that was both elegant and inviting.

Will's attention was caught by a particular painting hanging above the fireplace. It depicted a gruesome scene of a hunting party, with bloodied animals and hunters alike. Will couldn't help but feel drawn to it, and he found himself studying the details of the painting for several minutes.

As Will sat there, his mind wandered over the sensations he had experienced while interacting with Hannibal. He thought about the warmth of Hannibal's touch, and the way it made him feel. He also reflected on how it felt to be touched by Hannibal, and how it was unlike anything else he had ever experienced.

Will stood up, feeling the cool air brush against his skin as he placed his hands on the hem of his jumper. With a swift pull, he took it off. As he looked down, he noticed a small patch of Hannibal’s dried blood that had stained the fabric. His fingers danced over it, feeling the rough texture against his jumper. With a sigh, he placed the jumper over the end of the bed and began to unbutton his shirt. As he worked his way down, he couldn't help but think about his recent encounter with Hannibal. His mind was filled with thoughts of the enigmatic man, wondering what thoughts were running through his mind at that very moment. Will shook his head, trying to clear his thoughts as he continued to undress. Will's mind couldn't help but wander back to Hannibal. He thought about the man's piercing gaze and the way he seemed to see right through him. Hannibal's intellect and charm were like a magnet, drawing him in and captivating him. Will couldn't shake the feeling that he was under Hannibal's spell, and he wasn't sure if he even wanted to be free of it.

As he undressed, he replayed their recent encounter in his mind. The way Hannibal's hand had lingered on his back, how his hand felt against his - it was all so vivid in his memory. Will couldn't deny the effect that Hannibal had on him, and he found himself wanting more.

The thought both excited and scared him, but he couldn't help but crave it nonetheless. Will knew that Hannibal was dangerous, but he couldn't stay away. The allure of the man was too strong, and Will was powerless to resist. He tried to remind himself of the risks, the potential consequences of giving into temptation, but it was like trying to hold back a tidal wave. Hannibal had become an obsession, and Will was in too deep to turn back now..

Will stood in front of the mirror, hesitating for a moment before his hand finally landed on the button of his trousers. His fingers trembled slightly as he undid the button and slowly lowered the zipper. As he felt the cool air on his skin, a warmth began to spread within him, making him shiver with anticipation. With each tug of his trousers, he felt his heart rate quicken and his breath become shallow.

Will couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement mixed with fear as he undressed, his mind consumed by thoughts of Hannibal. He knew that their relationship was dangerous, but he couldn't resist the pull that Hannibal had on him. As he stood there, baring himself to the cool air, he couldn't help but wonder what Hannibal was thinking at that very moment.

He fell backwards onto the soft bed, clad only in his underwear. The vintage lighting of the room cast a warm glow upon his skinny frame, making him look almost ethereal in that moment. He let out a deep sigh as he closed his eyes. After a few minutes of lying there in silence, he shifted under the sheets. As Will tried to find comfort, he fidgeted, rolling from one side to the other. The room was quiet, aside from the sound of his movements. Will's mind was racing, his thoughts constantly shifting from one idea to another. He couldn't seem to focus on anything for longer than a few seconds. Perhaps it was the stress of the day weighing on him or maybe it was the anticipation of the upcoming meeting. Whatever the cause, Will found himself unable to relax. He took a deep breath, trying to calm himself down, but it was no use. The restlessness continued, making it impossible for him to settle down and rest. The only consistency in his mind was Hannibal.

Will trailed his fingers down to his waist, enjoying the sensation of the fabric against his skin. He wedged his fingers under his waistband and let his hand travel down further, feeling the warmth of his skin beneath his clothes.

As Will lay there, his mind continued to drift back to Hannibal. He couldn't help but wonder what the enigmatic man was doing at that very moment, and he longed to be with him. The pull that Hannibal had on him was stronger than ever, and Will found himself craving the man's touch. He imagined it was Hannibal's hand rather than his. Will had never felt this way before, and he couldn't quite put his finger on what it was about Hannibal that drew him in. Was it the way he spoke, his intellect, or something else entirely? As he pondered these thoughts, he began to think about the first time he met Hannibal, and how their relationship had evolved over time. He remembered the excitement he felt when Hannibal first approached him, and how their conversations had quickly become a highlight of his day. He found himself smiling at the memories, and wishing that he could relive those moments again. Will knew that his feelings for Hannibal were complicated, and he wasn't sure where they would lead. But for now, he was content to simply let his mind wander and indulge in the fantasy of being with the man he desired most.

Will began to massage himself. His hands moved in slow, circular motions. He breathed deeply, letting the sensation wash over him. As he continued, he felt his mind begin to drift, thoughts wandering aimlessly to hannibal. His mind accelerated at the thought, wondering what the other man's figure looked like underneath his perfectly tailored clothes. He imagined broad shoulders, a strong chest, and firm abs.

Will's mind was consumed with thoughts of Hannibal, and he found himself growing even more aroused. He couldn't help but imagine what it would be like to be with the enigmatic man, to feel his touch and his kiss. Will knew that their relationship was dangerous, but he couldn't resist the pull that Hannibal had on him. As he continued to indulge in his fantasies, Will felt himself growing closer and closer to the edge, until finally he couldn't hold back any longer. With a deep groan of pleasure, he gave in to his desires, letting himself be consumed by the passion he felt for Hannibal.

Will's body grew hotter and hotter as the waves of pleasure consumed him. His muscles tensed and relaxed rhythmically, his breaths turning into slow, deep moans. The sensation was all-encompassing, spreading from his fingertips down to his toes. He felt like he was on the edge of a precipice, ready to fall into an abyss of pure bliss. As he surrendered to the moment, his mind flooded with a kaleidoscope of sensations and emotions, each more intense than the last. He was lost in a sea of ecstasy, completely at the mercy of his own desires.

The sheets were so tightly stuck to Will's body that they seemed to have been magnetically attracted to his sweat. He had been so deeply absorbed in his enjoyment that he had failed to hear any shuffling outside his door. Fortunately, he had noticed when his door was nudged ajar, and he had immediately shot up, covering himself with the sheet.

Hannibal, with his usual keen observation, noticed his coworkers flushed state as he walked in the door. He could smell the sweat in the air and see Will's flustered expression. "My apologies, Will. It seems I interrupted," Hannibal said, averting his gaze and trying to hide the smile playing at his lips. He was almost flustered himself, seeing Will in this state, and started to back out of the room, but Will quickly spoke up. "No, no, please stay. Is there something you need to talk about? You seem preoccupied." He couldn't help but notice the way Hannibal's eyes darted around the room, as if searching for something. Will's mind had been wandering in the last hour, but he hadn't forgotten the reason he was there.

Hannibal hesitated before responding to William. His pause was almost imperceptible, but it was enough to give William pause. The two of them sat in silence for a moment before Hannibal finally spoke up. "No, William, I'm alright," he said, his voice low and measured. "But I would enjoy a walk, if you're up for it?"

William leaned forward, careful to keep himself covered as he did so. His thoughts were jumbled and disorganised, and he struggled to focus on the conversation. "Yeah, sure. Give me a minute," he replied absentmindedly. Hannibal nodded and closed the door behind him.

Outside, Hannibal stood for a moment, allowing the cool evening air to surround him. He felt a sense of calm wash over him, and he closed his eyes for a moment, savouring the moment of peace. Meanwhile, Will peered out of one of the windows, watching Hannibal as he gathered his thoughts and prepared himself for the walk ahead. As the sun began to set, casting a gentle glow upon Hannibal's land, the world around him seemed to come alive with

a peaceful stillness. The fields that stretched out before him were awash in golden light, their crops swaying softly in the evening breeze. The distant mountains, their peaks still kissed by the sun, rose majestically in the horizon. Hannibal stood there, taking in the beauty of the moment, feeling a sense of calm wash over him as he watched the sun slowly sink into the horizon. The colors of the sky shifted from shades of pink and orange to deep purples and blues, marking the end of another day and the beginning of a new night.

As Hannibal and Will walked through the fields, the cool evening air wrapped around them, carrying the scent of fresh earth and the sound of crickets chirping in the distance. The sky was a deep shade of blue, with a scattering of stars twinkling above them like diamonds. The fields were bathed in the light of the moon, casting long shadows behind the two men as they walked. The grass swayed gently in the breeze, rustling softly beneath their feet. The air was filled with the sweet fragrance of wildflowers, and the sound of a nearby stream provided a soothing backdrop to their conversation. Hannibal and Will walked in silence for a while, taking in the beauty of the night and the peace that it brought. They were lost in their thoughts.

As they walked through the fields, Will couldn't help but take in Hannibal's appearance. He looked striking against the backdrop of the moonlit landscape, his dark hair and clothing contrasting sharply with the pale glow of the sky. Hannibal's features were sharp and angular, his gaze piercing and intense. Will couldn't help but notice the way Hannibal seemed to be taking in the world around him, his eyes darting from one detail to the next with a sense of purpose. It was clear that Hannibal had a keen intellect and a sharp eye for detail.

Despite the unease that Will felt, he couldn't help but be drawn to Hannibal's charisma and charm. There was an air of mystery and danger about him that was both alluring and terrifying. Will found himself captivated by Hannibal's presence, even as he tried to keep his guard up. It was clear that Hannibal was a master of manipulation, able to draw people in with his charm and charisma, and Will couldn't help but wonder if he was just another one of Hannibal's pawns.

As they continued to walk, Will couldn't help but feel a sense of trepidation. He knew that he needed to be on guard, to watch for any signs of danger, but he couldn't shake the feeling that he was already in too deep. Hannibal's allure was too strong, and Will found himself unable to resist the pull that the enigmatic man had on him.

Will, still following Hannibal carelessly, felt as though he had been walking for hours. His feet ached and his stomach rumbled, but he couldn't bring himself to stop following the enigmatic doctor. As they emerged from the dense forest, Will couldn't help but gasp at the breathtaking sight before him. A clearing spread out before them, revealing a pristine lake and a rustic wooden bench that seemed to have been placed there just for them. Despite his exhaustion, Will couldn't help but appreciate the beauty of the setting, the way the sun sparkled on the water and the birds chirped in the trees. He wondered if Hannibal had planned this all along, or if it was just a coincidence that they stumbled upon such a serene spot in the midst of their journey.

Hannibal's voice broke him out of his reverie. "Have you ever seen anything like this, Will?" he asked, gesturing at the scenery around them. Will shook his head, still taking it all in. "No,

I haven't," he replied. "It's beautiful.”

Hannibal took a seat on the bench, which was made of rough-hewn wood and wobbled slightly as he sat down. He crossed his legs, revealing a pair of expensive leather shoes. As he settled in, he buttoned up his jacket, which was made of a soft wool blend and had a faint check pattern. Suddenly, a gust of wind picked up, causing a cascade of golden leaves to fall from the tree above and dance in the air around him. Hannibal closed his eyes and took a deep breath, savouring the crisp autumn air and the peacefulness of the moment. Will approached his friend and took his place beside him.

"Hannibal," he said softly, his eyes meeting Will's. "I wanted to apologize for what you walked in on earlier."

Will shook his head. "No, it was my fault.. But," he paused, "I'm glad I was there. I'm glad I know."

Hannibal nodded, a small smile playing across his lips. "I understand. But it isnt your concern." He paused, considering his words. "You know, William, there is much more to learn about yourself, about what you are capable of."

"Right now, I think we should focus on your needs," Will implored, hoping to steer the conversation back to the reason why they were there. He had always been a good listener, and he knew that Hannibal needed someone to confide in.

"But Will, as your psychiatrist, it is my job to help you," Hannibal answered calmly.

"I know that, Hannibal," Will said, his forehead wrinkling in concern. "But more importantly, I also care about you as a friend. I want to make sure that you're taking care of yourself too." Will paused, wondering how Hannibal could be so calm in the face of such a thing. He wanted to know more about Hannibal's perspective on the matter, to understand how he was able to remain composed despite the risks. "Can I ask you about it?" Hannibal tilted his head forward, hinting that he was open to Will's request. Will took a deep breath, grateful for the opportunity to learn more about his friend's thought process.

“Have you been doing it long?” Will made sure to keep his words soft and honest, knowing that he couldn't hide anything from Hannibal. He wanted him to know he cared deeply and truly about his welfare. Hannibal's hands were laced together over his knee, keeping himself sat upright. Will couldn't help but notice how calm and collected Hannibal appeared, especially considering what they had just discussed.

“Since the first instance and now, I suppose. Since the last time and now, a while.” Hannibal's gaze skimmed over the lake, lost in thought.

Will waited for a moment before pressing further. "What made you start doing it again?" he asked, hoping to learn more about Hannibal's motivations.

Hannibal paused, as if considering the question carefully. "Initially, It was a way to exercise control," he finally said. "To take something that was chaotic and make it orderly. It gave me a sense of power."

Will nodded, understanding Hannibal's desire for control. "And now?" he asked, wanting to know what Hannibal gained from it now.

Hannibal's lips slightly curved up, forming a small smile. He seemed to be deep in thought for a moment, before he spoke again. "I have come to realise that the concept of control is still as important to me as it was before, but my perspective on it has changed somewhat. I used to view control as a means to an end, a way to achieve my goals and desires, even if it meant being reckless in the process. But now, I understand that the pain it brings is what i deserve, and that the other benefit is more control over myself and my emotions in a sustainable way. It is a subtle shift in mindset, but one that has made a world of difference in how I approach life." Hannibal finished speaking, his smile still lingering on his lips as he waited for a response.

“Hannibal, it isn't sustainable. It can't continue," Will said, his voice heavy with concern. He looked at his friend, his eyes filled with worry. "You don't deserve this," he added softly. "I would know."

Hannibal looked at him, his face a mask of indifference. "And what do you know?" he asked coldly.

Will took a deep breath, steeling himself for what he was about to say. "I know that you're hurting, Hannibal. I know that you're fighting a battle every day, and that sometimes you feel like you're losing. But you're not alone. I'm here for you, and I always will be."

Hannibal's expression softened slightly, and he looked away. "I appreciate your concern, Will. Truly, I do. But this is something I must deal with on my own."

Will shook his head, his eyes never leaving Hannibal's face. "You don't have to do this on your own, Hannibal. You have people who love you, who care about you."

Hannibal was silent for a moment, and Will feared that he had said too much. But then, to his surprise, Hannibal spoke. "I think you are misjudging me, William. While it may be true that I don't have many people around me, I don't necessarily see that as a negative thing. I prefer to maintain a sense of independence and self-sufficiency. After all, people can be fickle and temporary. Why subject myself to that kind of instability in my life? I find comfort in my own company and in the things that make me happy - my hobbies, my work, and my own thoughts.”

"But you aren't happy, a happy man doesn't hurt himself," Will said, furrowing his brow in concern. He knew that pain was not the answer, that happiness was the true path to fulfilment. He looked at his friend, seeing the sadness in his eyes, and wondered what he could do to help.

Will's friend had a keen sense of observation. "You've hurt yourself before haven't you?" he asked. Will wasn't surprised that Hannibal had already figured this out.

“Yeah, when I was younger though,” said Willl. He paused for a moment, lost in thought, before continuing. “It was a difficult time for me. I remember feeling so alone, so different

from everyone else. But then, one day, I accidentally tripped and skinned my knee and i dont know, the pain, the distraction just gave me something i needed."

Hannibal nodded. "It is an unpleasant thing, to witness a friend go through. But it was worth it. And now, here we are, two like-minded individuals, sharing our stories and our struggles. It's a beautiful thing, really."

The two men nodded in understanding, both aware of the struggles that the other had faced. Will smiled at Hannibal, urging him to continue. "I'm sure you're just aching to tell me how you found out," he said with a chuckle. The two shared a laugh, their friendship strengthened by their mutual respect for each other's intelligence.

Hannibal began to explain. "I remember when you had the panic attack a while ago. I placed my hand on your arm to try and ground you. And then, at the river, when I was checking your pulse, I felt them." Hannibal spoke slowly and deliberately, his words measured and precise, as always. "But even before that i knew. When I first met you, I could tell that you were a man with a troubled past. Despite your shyness, there was a strength and resilience in your eyes that spoke volumes. It was as if you had been through so much, yet you never let it break you. I knew that getting to know you would be a journey, one that would require patience and understanding. But I also knew that it would be worth it, because there was something special about you that drew me in from the beginning. It takes a man of great strength to willingly harm himself and overcome his primal instincts. But you, Will, are not just any man. Your determination and resilience are unmatched, proving that you possess the fortitude to achieve great things." Hannibal paused, taking a deep breath before continuing. "Perhaps your willingness to endure pain is a sign of your ability to persevere through difficult challenges. Your strength is truly remarkable."

Will sat there, processing Hannibal's words. He couldn't believe that his friend thought so highly of him. As he thought more about it, Will's mind raced with the possibilities. He began to wonder if perhaps Hannibal had feelings for him as well. Will had never considered the idea before, but now it seemed like a real possibility. He thought about all the times they had spent together, analyzing crime scenes and discussing psychology. Maybe there had been more to those moments than Will had realized at the time. He couldn't ignore the way his heart quickened at the thought of Hannibal's affection. Will knew he had to explore these feelings further, but he also knew that it would be a delicate matter. Hannibal was not one to wear his heart on his sleeve, and Will didn't want to risk their friendship by making assumptions or mistakes. He decided that he would wait for the right moment to broach the subject with Hannibal, and in the meantime, he would try to act as normally as possible.

As he sat to the side of Hannibal, Will couldn't help but wonder whether Hannibal was aware of Will's growing feelings towards him. He had noticed Hannibal's piercing gaze lingering on him, and there was a subtle hint of a smile on his lips that made Will's heart race. Hannibal seemed to have a way of drawing him in, with his intelligence, charm, and impeccable taste. Will was torn between wanting to confess his feelings and fearing the rejection that might follow. He wondered if Hannibal would reciprocate his affection, or if he was simply playing a game, toying with Will's emotions for his own amusement.

Hannibal, with his tall and lean figure, stood still in the moonlight. He gestured towards Will and said, "I have something for you". Hannibal's eyes sparkled mischievously as he slowly crouched down, his fingers deftly plucking a large box and a long rod from the depths of the nearby tall grass. He turned to face Will, holding out the items with a pleased smile. "These are for you," he said, his voice low and measured. Will's eyes widened in surprise as he took the box and rod from Hannibal's outstretched hand. "For me?" he asked incredulously. Hannibal nodded, a small smile playing at his lips. "Consider it a gift," he said. "Something to help you unwind and relax. You lost yours in the river, and I couldn't save them, so I wanted to replace them. I know how much they mean to you." Will couldn't believe his luck. Hannibal's gifts were always thoughtful and well-chosen, and he knew that this was no exception. He eagerly accepted the box and rod.

As the temperature began to drop, both of them found it increasingly difficult to manage the cold. Will's excitement mixed with the shivering cold was quite apparent, yet he seemed to be completely unaware of his physical discomfort, Will's mind preoccupied with thoughts of their gifts. However, Hannibal was concerned for Will's well-being and did not want him to become ill. In light of this, he suggested that they make their way back home. As they walked, they chatted about their plans for the evening and what they could do to keep themselves warm. Hannibal also reminded Will of the importance of taking care of himself, especially during the colder months. Will spent most of the journey home smiling and laughing with Hannibal. He was grateful for the warmth and comfort that Hannibal's presence brought him, especially after the long and tiring journey. They talked about their shared interests and passions, and even discovered new things about each other. Will felt a sense of joy and contentment that he hadn't experienced in a long time. As they approached their destination, he couldn't help but feel a twinge of sadness at the thought of saying goodbye to Hannibal, but he knew he'd see him in the morning. In fact, he was already looking forward to their next encounter. They bid each other good night and went back to their rooms.

Breakfast.

Chapter Summary

Will falls ill.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

As the sun slowly rises over the horizon, the sky starts to change its color from dark blue to a lighter shade of blue, signaling the start of a new day. The trees in the forest are still dark and mysterious, but as the sun climbs higher, the light starts to filter through the branches and leaves, illuminating the forest in a golden glow. The forest slowly comes to life as the animals start to wake up, stretching their legs and preparing for another day of hunting and gathering. The birds start to sing, their melodies filling the air with a sweet and melodious sound. The rays of the sun are warm and golden, and they spread across the forest floor, casting long shadows that dance and sway with the gentle breeze. The dew on the leaves and grass starts to glisten as it catches the light, creating a sparkling and magical effect. The shadows of the trees start to shorten as the sun moves higher in the sky, and the forest becomes brighter and more vibrant, with every leaf and blade of grass standing out in sharp detail. As the sun continues to rise, the sky becomes a beautiful blend of oranges, pinks, and purples, painting the horizon with a stunning and awe-inspiring palette of colors. The colors are reflected in the still waters of the nearby lake, creating a breathtaking view that is both peaceful and serene.

The outside world appeared peaceful and serene, a stark contrast to the turmoil within the walls of the house. The guest room, where Will was staying, was particularly distressing. Deep within the clutches of a recent nightmare, Will was completely entranced and unable to shake off the horrors that had plagued his sleep. The room was dimly lit, with only a faint light filtering in from the morning sun. The gentle songs of the birds outside were muffled behind the windows His hands were frantically grappling with the bed sheets, clawing at his own skin in a futile attempt to escape the nightmare that had taken over his mind. Will woke up with a start, his heart pounding in his chest. He sat up, feeling the cold sweat pouring from every inch of his body. He looked around the room, his eyes wide and watery. He shuffled backwards in his bed, pulling his legs up and burying his head between his knees.

Will placed his arms on his knees and buried his face in his elbow, as if he were trying to hide. Will had curled himself up tightly, his body a compact knot of tension and anxiety. Will started to cry, gentle cries, just small sniffles here and there. He lay there in bed, his heart pounding in his chest, his breaths coming in short gasps. He had had a nightmare, one that had left him feeling shaken and vulnerable. It usually took the fear from a nightmare a while to dissipate, but today was worse. Will's body was heavy and uncooperative, as if it were weighed down by an invisible burden. His mind was loud, filled with a million thoughts that

seemed to be competing for his attention all at once. He tried to push them away, to quiet the voices inside his head, but they just kept getting louder. His stomach was turning, churning with a sense of unease that he couldn't shake. He hated himself for being so weak, for letting his fears get the best of him. He despised every inch of his being, every flaw and imperfection that seemed to make him so vulnerable to the world around him. As he sat there in the darkness, he tried to calm himself, to focus on his breathing and let the fear pass. But it was no use. The nightmare had left its mark on him, and he knew that it would be a long time before he could shake off the feeling of dread that hung over him like a dark cloud.

It took a while for Will to calm down, longer than usual. His heart was racing and his breathing was heavy. Will kept his eyes closed, trying to ease the painful pressure in his head. His face was wet with snot, tears and sweat. He sniffed, noticing there was great difficulty to this, which made him suspect he might be ill. He wondered if it was just a cold or something worse. Suddenly, a coughing fit overtook him, causing him to double over in pain. It felt as if his lungs were on fire. Will tried to catch his breath, but it seemed impossible. Will slowly stumbled over to the bathroom, his hands clutched tightly around his torso as he bent over and began to cough and splutter uncontrollably.

He relaxed a tiny bit and it passed. his mind was foggy and he was unsteady so when he heard a knock on his door he groaned quietly.

Hannibal was dressed in a comfortable ensemble, consisting of a smart jumper and soft trousers, although they were still quite presentable. He moved more slowly and with a greater sense of ease in his sleepy state, with slight changes in his mannerisms, such as heavier breathing. Despite his disheveled hair, which he had not yet styled, he still exuded a sense of grace. As he wiped his eyes and pinched the bridge of his nose, it was clear that he was not displaying frustration, but rather a sense of calmness. Hannibal embodied a sense of tranquility, even in his sleepwear. If Will had not been distracted, he probably would have giggled at this sight.

Hannibal's concern for William was evident in his gentle inquiry, "Is everything alright, William?" Although Hannibal spoke in his usual manner, his voice grated on Will's ears, amplifying every sound tenfold. Will, who had not caught a glimpse of himself today, assumed he looked the same as always. Hannibal, who had seen Will was struck by how fragile and unwell Will appeared as he wobbled in front of him. Will's sickness had clearly taken a toll on his already slender frame, and even the slightest movement seemed to require a great deal of effort. Hannibal couldn't help but feel a sense of unease as he watched Will struggle to maintain his balance. Will nodded in response, trying to hide the dizziness that threatened to overwhelm him. He didn't want Hannibal to know that he wasn't feeling well. Despite the spinning sensation in his head, Will managed to keep himself standing upright. Hannibal, who had a keen sense of smell, detected that something was off with William before he even saw him. The putrid smell emanating from William was so overpowering that Hannibal immediately knew that something was wrong. The stench was stifling, making it difficult for Hannibal to breathe normally. Despite his discomfort, Hannibal maintained his composure.

“Alright,” Hannibal smiled, knowing Will would not tell him anything. “I’m going to go make breakfast, get some sleep. I’ll come get you when it's ready.” Will let out a breath he

didn't realize he was holding as Hannibal turned away, allowing Will to shut his door. He stumbled back, almost passing out onto the bed. The room was spinning. Will wasn't sure if he had passed out or fallen asleep, but he was suddenly jolted awake by the sound of his name being called from downstairs. He lay in bed for a moment, feeling groggy and disoriented, but he knew he had to get up. He slowly swung his legs over the edge of the bed and sat up, rubbing his eyes and trying to shake off the feeling of nausea that had been plaguing him all morning. As he stumbled towards the door, he wondered what could be so important that someone was calling for him this early in the day.

He made his way down the stairs, his feet heavy and unsteady. His head was pounding and he felt as though he might be sick at any moment. When he reached the bottom of the stairs, he saw hannibal plating up food in the kitchen. Will had never felt this awful before. The pain was unbearable, and he could barely stand. He slowly sat down and tried to catch his breath, but it wouldn't come. He felt as if his body was slowly melting away, Will hoped in a way that it was, then he wouldn't have to eat this food.

Will gazed down at the exquisite dish in front of him, his eyes filling with tears, he couldn't do this. As Hannibal continued to speak, Will's mind was lost in a sea of swirling emotions unaware hannibal was even speaking at all. He absentmindedly pushed his food around with his fork, unable to muster the strength to look up and face Hannibal.Will was struggling to keep his composure. He could feel the tears threatening to spill over at any moment, but he refused to let them. Instead, he continued to pick at his food, trying to focus on anything but the intensity of his feelings.

As the conversation between Hannibal and Will came to an end, the latter's mind seemed to drift away. He appeared to be vacant, as if his mind had wandered off to another place. Hannibal, ever the observer, had noticed how Will's attention had waned during their discussion. In an attempt to gauge Will's level of comprehension, Hannibal continued to speak, but it was clear that Will was not fully present.

Hannibal's concern for Will's well-being was evident when he knelt down beside Will's chair and brushed his hand along his cheek. However, to his dismay, Will did not react to his touch. Hannibal soon realized that this was one of Will's episodes.

Sighing, Hannibal took Will's hand and gently removed the fork that he had been clutching. He placed Will's hands in his lap and waited patiently for him to come back to the present moment. In the meantime, Hannibal sat and finished his breakfast, he managed to clean up after breakfast before Will came to, he even sat and read the news momentarily. A small mutter is what caught his attention, Will had began to recalibrate into his body. Hannibal folded up his newspaper and returned to beside Will.

Will's eyes were blank, confusion and disorientation clouding his mind. He tried to adjust himself, but found himself unable to move. It was then that he noticed the absence of his fork, which only added to his confusion. He scanned his surroundings, trying to make sense of what was happening, and saw Hannibal sitting next to him. At first, Will couldn't quite comprehend Hannibal's presence or what he was looking at. As his senses slowly returned to him, he began to piece together what had happened and the reality of his situation began to set in.

"Sorry," Will mumbled apologetically in Hannibal's general direction. He felt the same as before his episode, but the intensity of his emotions had left him feeling somewhat drained. As he struggled to regain his focus, he found himself vacillating between a state of clarity and one of confusion, as though his thoughts were caught in a never-ending loop. Eventually, he was able to piece together the events of the past few minutes, but he couldn't shake the feeling that something had been lost in the process. Despite his best efforts to stay present, his mind kept wandering, and he found himself thinking of things that had little to do with his current situation. In the end, it took a concerted effort to keep himself from drifting too far away.

Will let out a loud sneeze, causing his nose to tingle as a result of his congestion. Hannibal, on the other hand, cringed at the sound, but was too preoccupied with his friend's well-being to be bothered by it. As he gazed at Will's plate, he noticed how little it had changed since he first presented it. His mind started to race as he began calculating.

“Are you sure you don't want to eat that?” he asked, pointing to the plate. Will shook his head and pushed it away.

“Is there a reason?” Hannibal leaned in, his eyes fixed on Will's face. Will shook his head again, feeling a bit embarrassed.

“You really need to eat something, Will,” Hannibal said, raising an eyebrow as he pondered whether or not this was a common occurrence. “When was the last time you had a proper meal?” Will shrugged, his stomach growling in protest.

As they sat there in silence, Hannibal couldn't help but feel concerned. They had been together for over a day now and he had yet to see Will eat anything substantial. He turned to his friend, his voice laced with worry.

“William, is there something you'd like to share with me? I'm here to listen,” Hannibal said, his voice gentle and soothing. Will nodded, his head rolling back, eyes closed.

“I’m going to be sick,” Will muttered, his movements sloppy, his mind and body barely under his control. “Hannibal, I’m going to throw up,” he said, his breathing heavy and labored. Hannibal's face dropped, and he hurried to fetch a bucket.

Will knew he wasn't going to make it, and he stumbled to his feet, his chest heaving with each harsh breath. His eyes watered, and his entire body trembled with the effort of trying to keep himself from being sick. Every muscle in his body ached, and he could feel the heat radiating off his feverish skin. Fumbling for the sink, he stood hunched over it, his entire body shaking. The coughing subsided, and he took a few deep breaths, trying to steady himself and regain his composure. Hannibal came back and placed a reassuring hand on Will's back. “Don’t fight it, Will. I'm sorry, but it has to come up.”

“No,” Will shook his head in protest and cried, “I don’t want to.” Will was shaking harder than ever before, his limbs almost giving out.

“I'm sorry, my dear Will. You've got to try to relax. Just let it out. You'll feel better,” Hannibal said, trying to reassure him. Will sobbed at his words, desperately trying to keep down his

vomit. Hannibal sighed. “Forgive me for this, Will,” he said as he took hold of Will's head and positioned him expertly. Will immediately heaved, and Hannibal tried not to blame himself for what he was putting Will through. He knew it was necessary, but listening to Will in pain like this was uncomfortable.

As Will continued to be sick, Hannibal tried to distract him by talking about things that interested him. He talked about his latest art exhibit, his travels, and his favorite books. Will listened, his breathing becoming more regular as he focused on Hannibal's words. Eventually, the vomiting subsided.

Will's hands were gripped so tightly to the sides of the sink that his knuckles turned white. His whole body was shaking uncontrollably, and his moaning, which was once loud and guttural, had now quieted down to barely a whisper. Despite his body's protests, Will's grip slowly started to loosen, his hands and arms aching more than ever before. His mind was a complete blur, and he couldn't comprehend anything that had happened in the last few minutes. All he knew was that he was dizzy and disoriented, and he could barely keep his eyes open. It was as if the world was spinning out of control around him, and he was powerless to stop it. Hannibal tried to catch Will as he fell, but he was caught off guard and struggled to keep his balance. Meanwhile, Will's consciousness began to fade, and he slipped into unconsciousness, his body going limp in Hannibal's arms.

Chapter End Notes

currently writing this at 3:30 am while being really unwell but all is well!!

Phone calls.

Chapter Summary

> Will remains unwell at Hannibal's house, and Hannibal cares for him. Alana comes to visit and witnesses Will having a seizure. Hannibal leaves the room after, and Alana stays with Will. Hannibal goes to his office and struggles with his emotions.

After a few days Will still finds himself at Hannibal's house . Despite Hannibal's best efforts to provide him with a comfortable space to recover in, Will remained quite unwell. He spent most of his time lying down, his head throbbing with pain. The room is dark and quiet, and the only sounds are the occasional footsteps of Hannibal moving about the house. The bucket that was once there for precaution is now a familiar sight to Will, as he often finds himself needing to vomit. Hannibal does his best to care for his friend. Hannibal devoted much of his time to tending to Will's needs, ensuring that he was comfortable and resting on his side. The fever had taken its toll on Will, rendering him delirious and incoherent most of the time. On the first night, Hannibal kept vigil by Will's bedside, reading a book while the latter slept. Suddenly, Will shifted his position and rested his head on Hannibal's lap, leaving the latter unsure of what to do with his hands. After a moment's hesitation, he gently ran his fingers through Will's hair and interlaced them with the locks, letting out a contented sigh. Hannibal remained by Will's side throughout the night, providing comfort and support as needed.

After a few days, Hannibal decided to give Alana a call to update her on Will's condition.

“Good morning, how is he?” Alana asked.

“Good morning,” Hannibal replied. He had been in the dark for so long that he had lost track of time and couldn't even remember what day it was. “His fever is yet to break. He is feeling a bit better, but I think it's because he hasn't eaten much.”

Alana let out a sigh. She wished that Will's condition had improved. “Can I come over and watch him for a bit? You sound tired.”

Hannibal dropped his head and looked at Will's door. He let out a deep sigh. “Thank you, Alana. That would be nice. I could use a break to rest a bit.”

Alana arrived at Hannibal's place and saw that Will was well cared for. She was careful not to disturb him and placed herself on the bed next to him, Hannibal was stood inside the room with them. She nodded to him to let her know she was settled and he exited the room, careful to keep it dark.

Hannibal walked down the long hallway, his footsteps echoing against the walls. He reached the end and stopped in front of his office door, his hand hesitating on the doorknob. It had

been a while since anyone had entered this room, and everything remained exactly as he had left it. The polished blades of his knives caught the light, and he couldn't resist running his fingers over them, testing their sharpness. The cool metal was reassuring to him, a constant in a world that was always changing.

Finally, he opened the door and stepped inside, closing it behind him. The room was quiet, and he took a moment to breathe in the familiar scent of leather and wood. He walked over to his desk and pulled out his chair, sinking into it with a sigh. He unbuttoned his sleeve and rolled it up, revealing the pale skin of his forearm. Will had cleaned him up last time, and Hannibal couldn't help but admire the other man's handiwork.

As he sat there, he couldn't shake the feeling of hesitation that had settled in his chest. Will had a hold on him, and he wasn't sure how he felt about that. Hannibal's hand almost shook as he picked up one of his knives, examining it closely before holding it to his wrist. He wondered what Will would think if he saw him now, sitting alone in his office with a blade in his hand. The thought made him pause, and he set the knife down on the desk with a sigh. He knew that he would have to see Will again soon, if only to ease the ache that had settled in his chest.

Alana sat by Will's side, watching his every move as he tossed and turned in his bed. She couldn't help but smile every time he mumbled something silly in his sleep. She gently brushed his hair out of his face, trying to make him as comfortable as possible. As he rolled towards her, she looked down at him and smiled.

"Hey buddy, how are you feeling?" she asked, lowering her voice to avoid overstimulating him. Will groaned and stretched, mumbling something incoherent into his pillow. Alana leaned in closer, trying to make out what he was saying.

"What was that, Will?" she asked softly.

"hmm,” he moaned, “in love with Hannibal," he muttered, his words barely audible. Alana couldn't help but feel surprised by his confession. She knew that Will had always been a bit of an enigma, but his feelings for Hannibal were unexpected. As Alana focused on Will, she noticed his hand twitching. It seemed odd to her, and she wondered how long it had been happening for. She furrowed her brow with concern, and then decided to lay her hand on Will's chest. As she did so, she felt his breathing become shorter.

Suddenly, Will's body tensed up, and she felt it through her hand. She sat up and onto her knees, her eyes locked onto her friend. Will's head rolled back, and his eyes rolled up. His body started to shake and convulse.

Alana called out to Hannibal, who quickly emerged from his office and entered Will's room. He turned on the lights and assessed the situation.

"How long?" Hannibal asked Alana, rushing over.

"Almost a minute," Alana replied, her eyes trained on her watch as she timed the seizure.

Hannibal quickly sprang into action. He grabbed all the covers and tore them off the bed. He scooped Will up as best he could and moved him to the middle of the bed. He placed a pillow under Will's head and behind him to allow him to stay on his side.

They both waited, patiently sitting on either side of their friend, waiting for the seizure to pass. It was a tense moment, and they both felt helpless as they watched their friend suffer.

"Hannibal, this is getting too long. It's almost been 3 minutes," Alana said, glancing at her watch.

Hannibal replied with confidence, "It's okay, he's going to be fine." However, he couldn't help but feel uncertain.

After another minute had passed, Alana grew concerned and suggested, "Hannibal, it's almost been 4 minutes. We should call an ambulance." She finally looked up from her watch, realizing it had been long enough for her to wonder what Hannibal was doing. He had a small vial in one hand and a needle in the other, examining it carefully under the light.

"Could you hold him still gently? Don't constrict him, just provide some stability," Hannibal instructed Alana.

With caution and care, Hannibal rolled up Will's sleeve and injected him with the contents of the vial. He tried not to be jolted by the violent seizure that shook Will's body.

Hannibal moved quickly and efficiently, knowing that time was of the essence. He had dealt with seizures before, but he had never seen one as violent as this. He hoped that the injection would help to calm Will's body and end the seizure. After a few tense moments, they both watched as Will's body finally relaxed, and the convulsions stopped. Hannibal let out a sigh of relief, feeling the tension in his body release. "He's going to be okay," he said, his voice barely above a whisper.

Hannibal left the room without saying anything. Alana watched as he walked to his office and closed the door behind him. She couldn't quite decipher the emotion he was feeling, but she had a feeling it wasn't good. She began to wonder if it was what happened with Will, remembering what he told her, she sympathetically smiled as she wondered if they felt the same way for eachother.

Alana chose to stay with Will. She closed the door behind her and sat beside him once again. Alana couldn't help but feel guilty for not following Hannibal, but she knew that Will needed her support right now, and she barely knew Hannibal, not well enough to offer him councel.

Back in his office, Hannibal let out a deep sigh, pushing the door until he heard the click as it shut. He knew he shouldn't let his emotions get the best of him, especially not today. But the situation had really gotten him worked up. He couldn’t stop himself, not today.

Water.

Chapter Summary

> the relationship between Will and Hannibal and will grows, including Hannibal's concern for Will's health and their mutual feelings for each other. Will struggles with exhaustion and nightmares, but finds comfort in Hannibal's presence. Hannibal takes care of Will. Both men realize their feelings for each other, but Hannibal is hesitant to admit his love for Will.

After Will had a seizure, he noticed an improvement in his coherence and was able to stand up more easily. While it took him only a few days to recover, he was used to feeling terrible, so the mild form of illness he experienced was something he could handle.

Hannibal had taken on all of wills work, no matter what it may be. He had kept Jack informed and got his approval for will to take time off work.

Will, however, was hesitant to take time off, knowing that his absence could affect the case's progress. Hannibal reassured him that his health was the top priority and that the team would manage without him. Despite this, Will couldn't shake off the guilt and stress of being away from work. Although he struggled with sickness and exhaustion, he found himself unable to escape their hold. Despite the challenges, he felt almost grateful for the lack of appetite that came along with it. It was as though the exhaustion had taken over his body to the point where even the act of eating became a chore. The lack of motivation to do anything was also a struggle, as he found himself unable to find the energy to complete even the simplest of tasks. However, he tried to remain positive and find solace in the things in his life, such as being able to spend his time with hannibal.

Hannibal had appreciated being able to keep an eye on Will, especially given the latter's recent illness. Hannibal understood that being ill could lead to a lack of appetite, but he suspected that Will's condition might be more complex. Perhaps there was an underlying psychological or emotional issue that was causing his lack of interest in food. Hannibal made a note to himself to observe Will more closely and to try to engage him in conversation about his feelings and concerns. After all, Hannibal was a trained psychiatrist, and he prided himself on being able to help his patients overcome their difficulties. In the meantime, he resolved to make sure that Will was well-fed and comfortable, even if he had to coax him to eat. Hannibal knew that good nutrition was essential for a speedy recovery, and he was determined to do whatever it took to help Will regain his strength and vitality.

At the diner table, Will sat in front of Alana and Hannibal. His food sat in front of him, untouched as he pushed it around from side to side. Hannibal and Alana's conversation flowed effortlessly throughout dinner, discussing everything from politics to their latest hobbies. Will tried to engage in conversation, but found himself lost in thought. He couldn't

focus on their words, his mind wandering to the serial killer case he was working on. As they finished their meal and the plates were cleared away, Hannibal brought up the topic of Will's work. This caught Will's attention, and he began to share the details of the case he was currently investigating. As he spoke, Alana and Hannibal listened intently, offering their own insights and ideas. The conversation continued well into the night, with each of them sharing their own personal experiences and thoughts on the matter.

Hannibal gazed over at Alana, curious to see if she had noticed what he had observed. Will had only begun to speak once the plates had been cleared from the table. Alana caught his eye and nodded in agreement, acknowledging that she had also noticed the same thing.

As they waited for the plates to be cleared, Hannibal and Alana discussed their shared concern about Will's recent behavior. Hannibal leaned in closer to Alana and whispered, "It is concerning, but now is not the time to address it. We should wait until he's back at work before we bring it up. After all, it could just be due to his illness."

Alana sighed, "I hope so too. It's just that he's been acting so strange lately. It's hard not to worry."

Hannibal nodded in understanding. "I know, but we need to be patient and give him the benefit of the doubt. We'll keep an eye on him and see how things progress." Will had not noticed that his friends had picked up on his aversion to food because he had not recognized it himself. This lack of awareness was not uncommon for Will, who often found himself absorbed in other matters. Perhaps, though, it would be worth considering whether this aversion had deeper roots, whether it was connected to some unresolved issue from his past.

This was Will's last night at Hannibal's, an evening filled with bittersweet emotions. As the night drew to a close, both Hannibal and Will seemed reluctant to see him go, yet they knew that it was time. When Alana left, the room was filled with an eerie silence that enveloped Hannibal and Will. They sat there, side by side, in each other's presence. For a few moments, Hannibal was lost in thought, his mind unable to comprehend why he didn't want Will to leave. After all, they would see each other almost every day, so why was he so bothered? As he pondered this question, he realized that his worry for his friend was only one part of the equation. There was a profound loneliness within himself that he couldn't quite put his finger on. It was as if he had been searching for something or someone to fill the void in his life, but nothing seemed to fit. In that moment, Hannibal realized that perhaps the reason he didn't want Will to leave was because he was afraid of being alone with his thoughts once again. For years, he had been able to suppress these feelings, but now they were resurfacing, and he wasn't quite sure how to deal with them. In addition to the familiar emotions, the arrival of Will in his life brought about new feelings that he had never experienced before. These new sensations were overwhelming at first, but over time he grew accustomed to them and even grew to enjoy their presence. Will's influence on him was profound, and he found himself constantly reflecting on their interactions, replaying conversations in his mind and analyzing every word. The depth of their connection was unexpected but undeniable, and he knew that his life would never be the same without Will in it.

Will was conflicted. He loved Hannibal and didn't want to leave him, but at the same time, he couldn't bear the thought of going home and being alone so why was he going. Sure, his dogs

would be there, but they couldn't fulfill the emotional support he needed. Will was at a pivotal point in his life, and he knew Hannibal was too. It was as if they were both standing in a river, the water level rising rapidly with the current pushing them towards an inevitable waterfall. If they were to survive, they had to make a decision, and it had to be simultaneous. They couldn't afford to act independently anymore. Hannibal and Will were like two inseparable halves of a single entity. They knew that they couldn't swim without the other, and they needed each other's support to face the challenges ahead. Hannibal's steely resolve and Will's sharp intuition complemented each other perfectly, and they both knew that together, they could overcome any obstacle.

The two of them headed upstairs, both tired from the day. Will, who had done nothing but sleep, yawned loudly, while Hannibal, who had spent the day working furiously in order to allow Will to stay off work, smiled and suggested he get more sleep than usual. As they walked up the stairs, the sound of their footsteps echoed through the empty hall. Will's eyes were half-closed, and he struggled to keep them open. Hannibal, on the other hand, seemed to be managing well, despite having worked all day. He looked at Will with concern and asked if he was feeling alright. Will nodded sleepily, but Hannibal could tell that he wasn't feeling his best. So, he suggested that Will get some extra sleep tonight. "You're still not better," Hannibal said, "you deserve a good sleep." Will smiled at Hannibal's kindness. He knew that he was lucky to have a friend like Hannibal, who was always looking out for him. With a yawn, he headed to bed, feeling grateful for the support and care that Hannibal showed him.

Will was exhausted from a long day of nothing and quickly fell asleep, still dressed in the clothes he had worn all day. Despite not usually having trouble falling asleep, Will often struggled to feel fully rested after sleeping. Even with a full night's rest, he would often still feel tired throughout the day. Unfortunately, many nights he would wake up several times due to vivid nightmares that left him feeling even more drained. However, even on the nights when he was able to sleep through without any nightmares, Will's tiredness still seemed to linger, tonight was no different. Will was soon startled awake by a vivid and unsettling dream. He jolted up in bed with a gasp, his heart racing as he tried to shake off the lingering feeling of dread. He reached over to his bedside table to check the time, squinting at the glowing digits of the clock. It was still the middle of the night, the night lapsing into the morning.

After taking a few deep breaths to calm himself, Will swung his feet over the edge of the bed and stood up, wincing as his bare feet made contact with the chilly floor. He padded over to the door, noticing that a few lights were still on in the hallway. He wondered if Hannibal was still awake, or if he had been up this whole time.

As he made his way to the kitchen to get a glass of water, Will's mind raced with thoughts of the dream. He tried to push them away, but they kept creeping back into his consciousness. He took a long drink of water, hoping it would help him clear his head. As he set the glass down on the counter, he realized that he was still wide awake, and unlikely to fall back asleep anytime soon.

"Will?" Hannibal walked in on him, concern etched on his face. He stood in the doorway of the kitchen, his tall figure casting a shadow on the floor. "Is everything alright? Why are you awake?"

Will looked up at him and offered a small smile. "Yes, I'm fine," he said, taking a sip of his water. "Just had a nightmare." He paused for a moment, staring at his glass.

Hannibal placed a hand on his shoulder, giving it a reassuring squeeze. "I understand." He paused for a moment, deep in thought. "Perhaps we could talk about it, if that would help you."

Will nodded, grateful for the offer. "I think that would be good. Thank you, Hannibal." He smiled again, feeling a sense of comfort wash over him. Hannibal had always been there for him, and he knew that he could trust him with anything.

"What are you doing up, by the way?" Will asked, curious about his late-night visitor.

Hannibal chuckled lightly, his eyes glinting mischievously. "I could ask you the same thing, my dear Will," he said, a playful tone in his voice. "But to answer your question, I was preparing a snack for myself. Would you care to join me?"

Will smiled, feeling his stomach grumble at the mention of food. "Sure, why not?" he said, standing up from his chair. "What did you make?"

Hannibal grinned, his eyes sparkling with amusement. "It's a surprise," he said, leading the way into the kitchen. "I hope you like it."

As they walked towards the kitchen, Will couldn't help but feel grateful for Hannibal's presence. He knew that he could always count on him to be there for him, no matter what. And as they sat down to enjoy their midnight snack, he felt a sense of peace wash over him, knowing that he wasn't alone. The two mismatched people having found their match could finally feel content and understood. They had been searching for someone who could complement them in every way, and after many attempts and failures, they found each other, even without knowing or understanding the other person felt the same way.

"William, are you in the same clothes as yesterday?" Hannibal asked, with a hint of concern in his voice. William looked down, embarrassed to see that he was indeed still wearing the same clothes as the day before. He couldn't remember falling asleep, so he assumed he just didn't have time to change.

Hannibal's polite smile didn't waver, but William could tell he was worried. Hannibal stood up and beckoned Will to follow him. He led Will to his room, which was dimly lit and adorned with antique furniture. Will was confused by Hannibal's sudden invitation, but he complied and stood meekly before Hannibal. Hannibal approached Will gently, his hands running up Will's jumper zip and undid it. Will's heart rate shot through the roof at his touch, feeling himself succumb to Hannibal's charm. As Hannibal pulled Will closer, he could feel the heat emanating from Will's body. Hannibal's eyes roamed over Will's face, admiring the way his hair fell over his forehead and the way his eyes sparkled in the dim light. Hannibal tenderly and carefully took Will's shirt off, revealing his fragile frame. It was evident that Will's rib and hip bones were much more noticeable than they should be, giving the impression that he was not as healthy as he should be. Despite this, Will remained still and allowed Hannibal to continue undressing him. Hannibal leaned into Will, his breath hot on his cheek. Will felt a shiver run down his spine as he tried to focus on what Hannibal was

saying. "I'll leave the pants to you, just leave them outside to be washed," Hannibal whispered in his ear. Will stood there, feeling his cheeks flush with embarrassment, as Hannibal walked back to his own room. Hannibal couldn't help but smile to himself, satisfied with what he had done to Will. Although Will was too shy to admit it, he had secretly been harboring feelings for Hannibal for some time now. Hannibal, being the charming and manipulative man that he was, had picked up on this and decided to take advantage of it. At least Will had finally admitted his feelings for Hannibal to himself. It was a moment of great relief and self-discovery for him. However, Hannibal was yet to realize the depth of his own desires for Will. Perhaps it was the fear of rejection or the fear of losing control, but Hannibal had not yet come to terms with the fact that what he felt for Will was love. In fact, as he reflected on their relationship, he began to see the subtle signs of love that had been there all along - the way he would catch himself smiling at the thought of Will, the way he would find himself lost in thought after their conversations, and the way his heart would skip a beat when he saw Will. It was a realization that both excited and terrified him.

Home.

Chapter Summary

Will adjusts to being back home - the two miss each other. Hannibal's mind reminds him of a worse time.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

After spending an extended amount of time with Hannibal, Will's house began to feel foreign and empty. Although his dogs still brought a smile to his face, he couldn't shake the feeling that something was off. Hannibal had become his safety net, and without him, Will felt scared and vulnerable. He couldn't help but wonder what would happen if he fell, if he would just fall and never be able to get back up again.

As he wandered through his empty house, Will found himself thinking back to the times he spent with Hannibal. The conversations they had, the meals they shared, the adventures they embarked on together. It was as if Hannibal had breathed new life into him, and now that he was gone, Will was struggling to find his footing again.

Despite his best efforts, Will couldn't shake the feeling that he was missing something, that there was a hole inside of him that only Hannibal could fill. He longed for the sense of safety and security that he felt when he was with Hannibal, and he couldn't help but wonder if he would ever be able to find that again alone.

Will was plagued with a constant sense of disorientation, his mind consumed by thoughts of his past and the mysteries of his present. He would spend hours lost in his own head, trying to piece together the fragments of his memory that seemed to elude him. Will struggled with a deep sense of detachment from the world around him. He found himself unable to fully engage with his surroundings, often feeling as though he was an outsider looking in. This led to days where he could barely muster the energy to get out of bed, lost in a haze of dissociation and confusion.

Winston, a loyal and loving dog, spent most of his days resting on his owner's lap. He was always close to Will, his owner, and could sense when something was wrong. Winston noticed that Will was ill and tried to nudge him awake. However, Will was unresponsive and Winston became concerned. Winston stayed by Will's side, never leaving him alone. He would occasionally bark, hoping to get the attention of someone who could help. The sun rose and set, days passed, and Winston never left Will's side. He was determined to stay with his owner, no matter what. Winston continued to stay by Will's side, always ready to comfort and protect him.

Will was unsure if spending his remaining days off work at home was a good decision. He contemplated over it, but ultimately decided to do so. During this time, he and Hannibal spent the days apart, but they were constantly thinking of each other. As Will spent more time at home, he began to feel a sense of calm settle over him. The constant thoughts and worries that had plagued him for weeks began to recede, and he found himself able to focus more fully on the present moment. Winston was a constant companion, offering comfort and support whenever Will needed it. Together, they spent their days exploring the woods behind the house, taking long walks through the countryside, and simply enjoying each other's company. It was a peaceful and restorative time, and Will was grateful for the chance to slow down and reconnect with himself and the world around him.

The owner of the dogs had a great affection for all of his pets, but it was evident that Winston held a special place in his heart. Winston was a very empathetic dog, always able to sense when his owner was feeling down or needed some extra love and attention. This bond between the owner and Winston was something that both parties cherished deeply, as it brought them both immense joy and comfort. Such understanding and connection between humans and animals is truly a special thing, and it is a testament to the power of the bond that exists between them.

Winston was an energetic dog who loved nothing more than running free in the great outdoors. On this particular day, he bounded through the fields, his paws barely touching the ground as he leapt over rocks and fallen branches. He chased after the other dogs, playfully nipping at their tails and rolling around on the grass with them. Winston was having the time of his life, and it showed in the wide grin on his face and the wag of his tail. As Will watched his dogs frolicking in the forest, he couldn't help but feel a sense of contentment wash over him. He marvelled at how their simple joy in chasing each other and playing fetch could bring so much happiness to his life. As he stood there, taking in the scene before him, a thought occurred to him: could he ever experience such pure, unadulterated joy? He pondered this question for a moment, feeling a lump form in his throat as he considered the possibility that he might never find such happiness. But then he looked back at his furry companions, and he couldn't help but smile. Maybe, just maybe, he could learn a thing or two from them about finding joy in life's simplest pleasures.

Will whistled and signalled his dogs to follow as he circled back and started walking home. The sun was setting behind him, casting long shadows across the fields of grass. He took a deep breath of the cool evening air and felt a sense of contentment wash over him. As he walked, he noticed a small family of rabbits scurrying across the path ahead of him. Will smiled and continued on his way, feeling grateful for the simple pleasures in life.

Will finally returned home, his heart full of happiness and contentment. He was happy to be reunited with his loyal dogs and to be surrounded by the familiar comforts of his house. As he settled back into his routine, Will felt a renewed sense of purpose and direction. As Will sat on his porch, his mind wandered to thoughts of Hannibal. He envisioned himself walking through the front door of their shared apartment, Hannibal's warm embrace awaiting him. Will could almost feel the sensation of Hannibal's soft lips on his own as they shared a tender kiss. He couldn't help but imagine their evening together, cooking dinner side by side, sharing stories of their day, and snuggling up on the couch to watch a movie. As he daydreamed about this perfect scenario, Will smiled to himself, wondering if it was an unattainable dream.

Meanwhile, Hannibal was cooking a savory meal in his well-stocked kitchen, as he carefully chopped up the fresh ingredients. While he was absorbed in the process of creating a culinary masterpiece, his mind couldn't help but wander to his complicated relationship with Will. Hannibal was constantly drawn to Will's unique way of thinking and the challenges that came with it. He couldn't resist the thrill of being around someone who could match his own intellect and wit. Despite his own struggles with morality and ethics, he found himself drawn to Will's sense of justice and his unwavering commitment to doing the right thing. As Hannibal continued to prepare his meal, he couldn't shake off the feeling that his obsession with Will would only lead to his own downfall. Hannibal's mind was in a state of confusion as he thought about the memories of Will staying with him. He remembered the bittersweet moments they shared, when Will was trying to cope with his inner turmoil. Hannibal's thoughts drifted to the times when they had long conversations, discussing everything from art to philosophy. He had grown fond of Will's company and had enjoyed having someone to share his thoughts with. But now, as he sat alone in his thoughts, he couldn't help but feel a sense of emptiness. He longed for the days when Will was around, and he could feel the warmth of his presence. Hannibal knew that he had to find a way to cope with his feelings and move on, but it was easier said than done. He sighed deeply and shook his head, trying to push away the thoughts that were consuming him.

Hannibal had not felt this kind of emotion in a long time, not since his younger years, before his unsavory habits took hold of him. As he thought back to that time in his life, he allowed his mind to analyze the memory in greater detail.

The night was cold and the streets were quiet. Hannibal was walking back home after having been sent out to retrieve some late night groceries. Despite the late hour, he had no fear of the dark streets, for he had memorized the streets of his Lithuanian hometown well. As a teenager, Hannibal was lean and tall, standing out from his peers. Despite his height, he was considerably skinny. He had yet to experience any grey hairs, but his attire was already in similar taste, opting for a more rugged appearance. His younger self had yet to afford anything more than a raggedy shirt and trousers, which he wore with a sense of pride.

As Hannibal made his way down the street, he caught sight of a closed bar that was oddly bustling with people today. He couldn't help but feel curious, but he knew better than to get sidetracked by such distractions. However, as he walked past the establishment, a group of drunk men stumbled out and started shouting obscene things at him. Hannibal tried to ignore them and kept walking, but the men continued to follow him, their drunken steps unsteady and unpredictable. Hannibal could feel his heart rate quickening as he realized he could be in danger, but he didn't want to show any fear or give them the satisfaction of getting a reaction out of him. Hannibal, who was not the man he is today, was still developing his character at the time of this memory. This particular experience left such an indelible impression on him that he made a conscious effort to remain calm and composed in the face of any situation.

Hannibal's heart pounded in his chest as he picked up the pace, his pursuers hot on his heels. He ducked around a corner, hoping to lose them in the labyrinthine streets, but they were too close. The sound of their footsteps spurred him on, but he knew he was running out of options. Finally, he found himself trapped in a dimly lit side street, his back against a wall.

Desperately, Hannibal scanned his surroundings for an escape route. His eyes fell upon a metal fence behind him, and he knew that it was his only chance. He took a deep breath and prepared to make the jump, but as he leapt up, one of the men grabbed him by the ankle and pulled him back down. Hannibal felt his head connect with the hard concrete of the ground with a sickening thwack. Hannibal let out a groan as the men continued to laugh at him, mocking him for reasons he did not understand. He tried to get up but they kept kicking him down, making it impossible for him to stand on his own two feet. The men seemed to be enjoying the sight of his struggle, their laughter growing louder with each passing moment.

“We know what you are,” one of them said, slurring their words and making it difficult for Hannibal to understand what was being said. He could sense the hostility in their voices, and he knew that he was in trouble.

“Kapok varškę,” Hannibal spat at them, his anger rising with each passing moment. He could not understand why they were treating him this way, and he was determined to fight back. He tried once again to get onto his feet, but the men continued to push him down, making it impossible for him to escape.

As he lay there, struggling to catch his breath, Hannibal knew that he needed to find a way out of this situation. He could feel the weight of their hatred bearing down on him, and he knew that he could not stay there forever.

“Your little friend told us.” Another one said, “Little faggots.” Hannibals eyes widened, realising what was going on. Hannibal's heart raced as he realized he needed to escape the drunken men as quickly as possible. He scanned the alley for possible escape routes but found himself face-to-face with another inebriated man. Hannibal tried to quickly sidestep the man and continue running, but the man grabbed him by the arm and pulled him back. Hannibal could smell the alcohol on the man's breath as he struggled to break free, but the man wouldn't let go. Hannibal knew he was trapped and his mind raced for a solution. The sound of the drunk man's belt buckle echoed through the alleyway as he undid it, pushing Hannibal up against the brick wall. Hannibal could hear his own heart racing as he tried to think of a way out. He had never been in a situation like this before, but he had heard stories from friends about what could happen in these types of situations. His mind raced as he tried to come up with a plan, but the alcohol on the man's breath was overwhelming, making it hard for Hannibal to concentrate. As the man's hand reached for him, Hannibal froze.

The other men laughed loudly, their derisive chuckles echoing through the air. "What's the matter, scaredy-cat?" they taunted Hannibal, their words like barbs. "You like it better this way, don't you?" Their laughter was cruel and almost deafening, drowning out the cries and protests of Hannibal. He felt helpless and vulnerable. After the man was done using him for pleasure, he was carelessly thrown to the ground. As he lay there, the others continued to toss him around like a discarded toy, heedless of the pain they were causing him. Slowly, Hannibal struggled to his feet, his mind racing with confusion and fear, the men left and returned to the bar.

As Hannibal stumbled through the dark streets, his heart pounding in his chest, he knew he had to get home. His injuries were extensive - blood oozed from his lip, his nose, and countless other places. His left eye was swollen shut, and he could barely see out of his right.

But the pain was not just on the surface; his ribs ached with every step he took, and it felt like his leg might give out at any moment.

Hannibal tried to focus on the path ahead, but his mind kept wandering. How had he gotten into this situation? He took a moment to ponder the words of the men, who had spoken about his dear friend - his closest confidant. In Hannibal's solitary world, there were only two people who mattered - his beloved sister and his best friend. Hannibal's world was small, but to him, it was everything. As the days passed, however, Hannibal began to realize that his feelings for his best friend were more than just friendly. He wanted more - needed more. Finally, after much internal debate, Hannibal decided to take the risk and confess his true feelings to his friend. One evening, when the stars shone bright in the sky, Hannibal laid it all on the line and kissed his best friend. It was a bold move, but Hannibal couldn't keep his feelings hidden any longer. Unfortunately, his best friend didn't reciprocate his feelings, and their friendship was shattered. Hannibal was devastated - he had lost the most important person in his life. He assumed they would never speak again, and he was left alone to grapple with the pain and heartache of unrequited love.

As he limped along, Hannibal thought about all the people he had disappointed in his life. His parents, his sister, - they had all expected so much more from him. And yet, here he was, beaten and broken, unable to even make it home without collapsing.

Finally, after what felt like hours of walking, Hannibal saw the familiar shape of his house in the distance. He gritted his teeth and pushed himself forward, determined to make it to his bed. Mischa was standing at the gates, feeling increasingly anxious as she waited for Hannibal to return; he had been gone much longer than expected. Her mind raced with all sorts of possible scenarios, each one more terrifying than the last. Mischa couldn't help but worry. Hannibal was a strong and capable person, but even he had his limits. Mischa wondered if he had been pushed too far this time. She clutched her hands together tightly, fighting back tears. The thought of losing Hannibal was too much to bear. The longer he was gone, the more she feared the worst. Finally, after what felt like an eternity, she saw a figure in the distance. Mischa's heart leaped with joy and relief as she realized it was Hannibal. He was safe! As she ran towards him, her heart pounded in her chest, her mind racing with worry. She could see him in the distance, but the darkness of the night obscured his features. Tears streamed down her face, her eyes filled with fear and apprehension. She had no idea what had happened, but she knew that something was terribly wrong.

As she approached Hannibal, her pace slowed, her legs heavy with dread. She could see him more clearly now, and the sight of him made her gasp. His face was bruised and battered, his clothes torn and bloodied. She could barely recognize him.

Hannibal looked away from her, his body wracked with sobs and he let himself fall to the floor. She could hear the pain in his cries, the agony of his suffering. She wanted to comfort him, to take away his pain, but she knew she couldn't. All she could do was be there for him, to offer him her shoulder to cry on. Finally, when he had cried all he could, she helped him up from the ground. She could feel his weight against her, his body weakened by the ordeal he had endured. She supported him as they walked towards the house.

Hannibal was lost in thought, reminiscing about the past when a sudden and sharp ringing noise jolted him back to reality. Hannibal couldn't help but wish that the disturbance had come sooner. He had been trying his best to avoid reliving that unsavory experience any longer. Despite his dwindling appetite, he resumed cooking and reset the timer. After all, Will was expected to return to work tomorrow and would no doubt require sustenance. Perhaps tomorrow he would prepare something extra special for his friend. As Hannibal contemplated his feelings for Will, he couldn't help but remember the danger he had faced in the past when he had allowed his desires for men to take over. The fear of being exposed, rejected, or worse, had always been the driving force behind Hannibal's reluctance to embrace his true self. But now, with Will, things were different. Hannibal couldn't deny the depth of his affection for the other man, and he knew that he couldn't keep running away from it.

As he sat there, lost in thought, Hannibal realized that his love for Will was tied to a deep sense of insecurity in his identity. He had always struggled with accepting himself for who he was, and he knew that this had to change if he wanted to move forward with Will. It wasn't just a matter of being friends or something more; it was about being true to himself and allowing himself to love without fear.The attack had shaped Hannibal's identity, and if he were to ever live his life with Will, that would have to change. Hannibal just wasn't sure if he was capable of changing.

Chapter End Notes

kapok varškę meaning 'chop curd'. a lithuanian way of saying asshole.

Responibilities.

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal work on a difficult case, unbeknown to will it’s too much for him causing Will's subsequent breakdown. Will struggles with losing control of his body and the consequences of his actions. Meanwhile, Hannibal appears to be distant and aloof, causing Will to worry about their friendship.

It was the start of a long day for Hannibal and Will. They had been given a case that had the entire department in knots. Jack had been sending them in different directions, and with no breaks in sight, the two barely saw each other the whole day. Despite the challenges, they persisted and followed up on every lead to the best of their abilities. As they dove deeper into the case, they uncovered a web of deceit and betrayal that threatened to tear their investigation apart. Every new clue led to more questions and the hours ticked by as they worked tirelessly to piece together the puzzle. As the sun began to set, Hannibal and Will were no closer to solving the case, but they refused to give up. Will had grown accustomed to the unpredictability of his work schedule, never knowing when he would actually be able to leave. Hannibal, on the other hand, was more equipped to handle such an uncertain lifestyle. Fortunately, Will had a bit of a reprieve on the horizon. Jack had asked him to cover a class, providing him with a much-needed break from the chaos of his usual workday. As Will prepared for his upcoming class, he took a few deep breaths and tried to focus on the task at hand. He reviewed his lesson plan and made a mental note of the key points he wanted to cover. As he looked over his notes, he couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement for the upcoming lecture.

When he arrived in the classroom, he greeted his students with a warm smile and began his lecture. He spoke clearly and confidently, elaborating on the key points he had prepared earlier. As he looked around the room, he noticed that his students were engaged and attentive, nodding in agreement as he spoke.

As the class progressed, Will found himself going off-script, adding in anecdotes and examples to illustrate his points. He was surprised at how easily the words flowed from his mouth, and he couldn't help but feel a sense of pride at the positive reaction from his students. He was widely respected as an educator, known for his exceptional skills in teaching. Despite this, he often found it challenging to establish a rapport with others. However, when he succeeded in creating an environment of open communication, he felt a sense of pride and satisfaction in his ability to connect with people. Building these connections allowed him to better understand and guide his students, ultimately leading to even greater success in their education.

Hannibal stood in the entrance to his class, leaning against the wall, admiring his partner's work.

However, Hannibal's moment of peace was short-lived, as he had just received another task from Jack. He felt a sense of urgency as he thought about the weight of the task at hand. Jack was always demanding, and Hannibal knew that he had to work quickly and efficiently to meet his expectations. As he walked away, Hannibal couldn't help but feel a sense of relief as he caught a glimpse of Will's smiling face.

Will's sentence faltered as he watched Hannibal walking away. He had always admired Hannibal's poise and confidence, and had often wished he could be more like him. As he saw Hannibal disappear around the corner, Will couldn't help but feel a twinge of envy mixed with admiration. He walked around to the other side of his desk, feeling a sense of emptiness now that Hannibal was gone. He wondered what Hannibal was thinking, what his next move would be. Will had always been fascinated by Hannibal's mind, the way he could see patterns that others couldn't. He had even consulted with him on a few of his cases, amazed by the insights Hannibal was able to provide. As he stood there, watching the empty space where Hannibal had been, Will couldn't help but feel a sense of longing.

As Hannibal walked away, The Stag continued in behind him with an almost ethereal grace. It seemed to be drawn to Hannibal’s presence in a way that Will couldn't quite understand. Will stood his ground, trying to make sense of the situation. He could feel the stag's breath on his face, its hot breath mingling with the cool air around them. The stag's imposing figure loomed over Will, its horns glinting in the sunlight. Will couldn't help but feel a sense of awe and fear at the same time. It was as if the stag was both a majestic and terrifying presence, all at once. As he gazed up at the creature, Will couldn't help but wonder what it was trying to communicate to him.

“Mr. Graham?” A young voice said from behind him causing the stag to fade before Will. Will turned, shaking his head to gain clarity. Will apologised and looked around at the class but the class was empty, he stood confused in front of his student. “Class ended a while ago, sir.”

Will felt a strange sense of disorientation as he tried to shake off the fog of confusion. The pang of guilt that he hadn't noticed the time sooner started to gnaw at him. He found himself wondering if he'd missed something important in class. He scanned the empty room as he tried to recall what he had taught.

Suddenly, the sound of his student's voice snapped him back to the present. “Hm, I'm sorry. Did you need something?” he asked, curious as to why his student had stayed behind.

The young student hesitated for a moment before replying, “No sir. I’ll be on my way now.” His student scurried away fairly hurriedly, leaving Will to ponder the interaction.

As the student was walking out of the building, they noticed Alana turning the corner. It was clear that Alana was making an effort to walk towards Will who was standing a few feet away. As she passed the student, she nodded at them and patted them on the back in a friendly manner. Will raised an eyebrow at the interaction, intrigued by the familiarity between his student and the woman. As she walked towards will, her heels made a loud clacking noise against the floor, drawing his attention to her stride.

Turning his back to Alana, he gestured towards the student and asked, "You know them?"

Alana shrugged. "Kind of," she replied with a smile "I heard you kind of spaced out this class - everything alright?" She was careful to breach the subject in a calm and non-pushy manner, fully aware that Will could act like a scared rabbit when pressured.

Wills was visibly annoyed as he answered Alana's question, "Yes, Alana, I'm fine." He turned to her and adjusted his glasses, wondering why she felt the need to ask. "How do you know? Spying on me?" He tried to make light of the situation, but Alana's guilty expression made him feel betrayed. "Alana?" he asked, taking a step back. "Who was it?" His voice grew louder, as he demanded to know which student had been tasked with it. He was feeling uneasy and distrusting. Alana, sensing his apprehension, tried to explain herself, but he was too upset to listen. He felt like he couldn't trust anyone, and the thought made him even more agitated. "Was it them?" he asked, referring to the student who had stayed behind earlier. Alana hesitated for a moment, then tried to defuse the situation. "Will-" she began, but Will had already turned and was walking away. "Let's go find out," he called back over his shoulder.

Alana was surprised by Will's sudden burst of energy as he bolted down the hallway in search of an answer he believed lay within one of his students. Alana struggled to keep up with him as he shouted at the end of the corridor, hoping to grab the attention of the student he was after. Finally, the student turned around, startled by Will's urgency, and took off in the opposite direction. Will didn't hesitate for a moment, and quickly began to run after them, determined to catch up and get the answers he needed. Will's body was trembling with an overwhelming emotion that seemed to have a mind of its own. His usually logical mind was now at the mercy of his emotions, leaving little room for rational thought. It was as if a force had taken over his body and was driving him to act in a way that went against his own wishes which were to leave his poor student alone.

Will's superior strength and size allowed him to easily catch his student, grabbing them abruptly by their shoulders, shouting at them demanding answers. The student, clearly intimidated by Will's imposing presence, froze with fear and looked away, closing their eyes tightly as they desperately tried to wiggle away from his grasp. Will's mind was in turmoil as he grappled with the loss of control over his body. He could see his student struggling to break free from his grasp, and he could feel Alana's arm between him and the student. Despite her efforts, Will could hear her cursing at him as she worked to pry the two of them apart. Finally, Alana managed to get the student away from Will and led them to a nearby bench where she tried to calm them down. Will, meanwhile, retreated to the safety of a nearby wall, his hands shaking in front of him as he tried to regain his composure.

As he sat there, Will's mind raced as he tried to figure out what had happened. He had never lost control of his body like that before, and he couldn't help but wonder what had caused him to snap. Was it stress? Anxiety? Something else entirely? He knew he needed to get to the bottom of it, but for now he was content to sit there and try to calm himself down. As he did, he couldn't help but think about the impact that his outburst had had on his student. Would they ever look at him the same way again? Would they be afraid of him?

As he stood there, he couldn't help but notice the way Alana's eyes softened as she tried to calm down his agitated student. He watched as she spoke softly, her words gentle and reassuring, but the student refused to listen. As the students got up swiftly and took off down

the hallway, shoving their way past Jack and Hannibal, the latter two turned to let the student run past to avoid being in the way. Hannibal, ever observant, couldn't help but notice the tear-laden face of the student as they rushed past him. He turned his gaze down the hallway and saw Alana standing in the middle of it all. Meanwhile, Will was off to the side, looking like he was in distress, with his head in his hands.

Hannibal, accompanied by Jack, hurriedly approached the scene of the commotion. Jack, with his voice booming and thunderous, was the first to speak. "What happened here?" he exclaimed.

Will, feeling overwhelmed with guilt and shame, leaned his head back against the wall and let out a heavy sigh. "I'm not sure," he admitted, his voice heavy with emotion.

Alana, seemingly taking responsibility for the situation, chimed in. "It's kind of my fault," she confessed. As the group stood in silence, each lost in their own thoughts, they all knew what consequences they could potentially face.

The atmosphere in Jack's office was tense. Will paced the room, his mind consumed by the situation at hand. Alana and Hannibal sat at opposite ends of the room, both appearing calm on the surface, but undoubtedly feeling the weight of the moment. They were all waiting anxiously for Jack's phone call to come to an end.

After several moments of Jack speaking on the phone, he finally hung up. The team held their breath, waiting for him to relay the news. Jack hesitated for a moment, clearly not wanting to be the bearer of bad news.

"Okay. Well they aren't pressing charges," Jack said, causing the three of them to let out a collective sigh of relief. Will, however, was not fully satisfied with this outcome.

"Why not? Did you speak to them?" Will asked, his anxiety still palpable.

"I'm not sure," Jack replied, leaning back in his chair, "but I wouldn't question it if I were you, Will. I spoke to their guardian."

Will's eyes widened in surprise. "Guardian?"

"Yes," Jack nodded,

Will let out a deep sigh of frustration. It was clear that he was not happy with the situation. "Of course they were vulnerable," he said to himself, trying to make sense of the whole thing. "It makes sense as to why Alana picked them to spy on me."

Alana, who was standing next to him, was quick to react. "Will?!" she said sharply.

"What?" Will shot her a disgusted look, clearly not impressed with her actions. "You used them, Alana." Will paused for a moment, trying to gather his thoughts before continuing. "It makes me wonder if you picked on them specifically because they were vulnerable. That's not right. We should be helping those who are vulnerable, not exploiting them."

“You understand what this means though Will,” Jack interrupted, his tone grave. “You're going to have to be suspended from teaching and have a mental assessment to check on your state.”

Will opened his mouth to protest, not because he wanted to deny instability but because he didn't deem himself a danger to others, but as he thought he realised that this situation disproved this. Will realised he didn't know himself anymore. He was scared.

He felt his heart beating rapidly, the sound of it filling his ears. His hands trembled, and he could feel the sweat on his palms. As he looked at the chaos around him, he realized that he didn't know who he was anymore. He thought about his past, about the decisions he had made, the people he had hurt. He wondered if he was truly a danger to others, if he was capable of causing harm. The thought terrified him.

As he sat on the bench, Will's body shook with a mixture of fear and anxiety. The situation in front of him was truly disturbing - he felt like his world was collapsing. The thought of losing everything he had worked hard for made him feel helpless and small. Alana and Jack were in a deep conversation discussing some of the details of their upcoming project. Will looked over to Hannibal, who was sitting across from him, leaned over his elbows resting on his knees, and his hands supporting his head as he looked at the floor. Hannibal appeared to be lost in thought, perhaps contemplating some of the intricacies of the situation. Will wondered what was going through Hannibal's mind feeling guilty for adding to his troubles. Meanwhile, Alana and Jack continued to talk, their voices rising and falling, as they worked through the details of Wills situation. Will tried to focus on what they were saying, but his attention kept drifting back to Hannibal, who remained lost in thought.

Will felt neglected by Hannibal, as if he was purposely avoiding him. Although it may not have been true, Will couldn't shake off the feeling that Hannibal was not interested in engaging with him. Perhaps it was because Hannibal had been busy, but Will couldn't help but wonder if there was more to it than that. Had something happened that he wasn't aware of? Was Hannibal upset with him for some reason? Will tried to brush off these thoughts, but they kept creeping up on him, making him feel increasingly anxious and insecure.

As the meeting came to a close, Will couldn't help but feel a sense of dread. He knew that the consequences of his actions would be severe, and he couldn't help but wonder what would happen next. Alana, Jack and Hannibal stood up, ready to leave, but Will remained seated, lost in thought. He wondered how he would be able to move forward from this, how he would be able to regain the trust of his colleagues and students. As he sat there, Will couldn't help but feel a sense of loneliness, as if he was completely alone in the world.Will sat there in the empty room feeling more isolated than he had ever felt before. He was lost in thought, his mind racing with all the things that had led him to this moment. As he sat there, he suddenly noticed an outstretched hand in front of him. He looked up to see Hannibal's face, staring back at him with concern.

For a moment, Will thought he must be hallucinating. He had thought Hannibal had left, but here he was, offering his hand to Will. Tentatively, Will placed his hand in Hannibal's, allowing him to pull him up from the chair and into a warm embrace.

As Hannibal held him, Will felt a sense of comfort that he hadn't felt in a long time. Hannibal whispered in his ear, "You'll get through this. We're here for you." Will looked over to the doorway and saw Jack, Alana, and Beverly standing there, waiting for him to join them.

As they walked out of the room together, Will couldn't help but feel grateful for the support of his friends.

The group of five walked out of the building, their footsteps echoing against the concrete floors. Beverly walked beside Jack, glancing at him every now and then, while Alana walked on his other side, a slight smile on her face. Will and Hannibal walked behind them, their strides matching each other's.

As they stepped out into the sun, Will couldn't help but feel a little relieved. He had been worried that Hannibal was ignoring him, and he finally mustered up the courage to ask him about it. To his surprise, Hannibal admitted that he was indeed ignoring him. Will was taken aback but also grateful for Hannibal's honesty. He wondered what had caused Hannibal to ignore him in the first place, but decided to let it go for now. Will was lost in thought, trying to come up with a way to start a conversation with Hannibal again. Meanwhile, Hannibal was deep in his own thoughts.

As people got into their cars and said their goodbyes, Hannibal strolled off while Will bid farewell to his friends. Will watched Hannibal standing in the beaming sunlight, wondering what was on his mind. He called out to him, "Are you okay, Hannibal?" Hannibal rotated his torso and called back, "Go home, Will."

Will felt a pang of concern for his friend, but he was too exhausted to pursue it any further. Will didn't want to pry, but he couldn't help but worry about his friend's wellbeing. Despite feeling worried, Will obliged Hannibal's request and headed home. As he walked away, he couldn't help but think about their recent interactions. Lately, Hannibal had been distant and aloof, and Will couldn't help but feel like he was being shut out. He wondered if he had done something to upset Hannibal, or if there was something else going on. Regardless, he knew that he would have to give Hannibal some space and hope that their friendship would be given the opportunity to repair itself.

Life.

Chapter Summary

Will is struggling with his suspension and the tension in his relationship with Hannibal, causing him to feel trapped in his own thoughts and emotions. He contemplates calling Hannibal to resolve things, but is afraid of rejection. He feels overwhelmed and at a loss for what to do. Winston, his dog, tries to cheer him up, but Will sinks deeper into depression. Will thinks about his life.

Will couldn't stop thinking about his suspension and the reason behind it. It weighed heavily on his mind, causing him to lose more sleep and miss more meals than usual. He couldn't help but feel like he was being unfairly punished, especially since he had so much on his plate. His relationship with Hannibal was on the rocks, and the constant tension between them was taking a toll on his emotional well-being. In his heart, he knew that he needed to talk to Hannibal and sort things out, but the fear of rejection and the possibility of making things worse kept him from doing so. As a result, he felt trapped in his own thoughts and emotions, unable to move forward. The suspension only added to his feelings of helplessness, and he couldn't shake off the feeling that he was being punished for something that wasn't entirely his fault. All of these emotions were overwhelming, and he didn't know how to deal with them.

He had been contemplating calling Hannibal for a while, but it seemed like everything was happening at the wrong time. Will had felt a sense of confusion and frustration as he couldn't understand why Hannibal was being distant, the stress of his job was already taking a toll on him, and Jack's constant pushing only added to his worries and although his class had gone well, things took a turn for the worse after Will's episode, and this further strained his relationship with Hannibal. As a result, Hannibal had to take on Will's extra workload, leaving him with little to no free time.

Will was at a loss for what to do next. He couldn't keep ignoring his problems, but he also didn't know how to or want to confront them. The thought of talking to Hannibal was daunting, but he knew deep down that it was the only way to move forward. He had been grappling with the idea for a while now. He played out the scenario in his head over and over again, weighing the pros and cons. He knew there was no turning back once he made up his mind, but he just wasn't sure if he was ready for what lay ahead. He was caught in a dilemma, unsure of how to proceed. He treasured his friendship with Hannibal, yet at the same time, he couldn't bear the idea of being estranged from him. This internal conflict weighed heavily on his mind, as he struggled to find a way out of this predicament. Perhaps it would be best to have an open and honest conversation with Hannibal, to clear the air and attempt to resolve any issues that were causing the tension between them.

Will picked up the phone, his thumb hovering over the button to call him. He hesitated, wondering if he should call, he tossed the phone down on the couch beside him and sank back, letting out a deep sigh that echoed through the empty room. The weight of his frustration settled over him like a blanket, suffocating any hope he had left. He tried to distract himself by gazing out the window, but the view only reminded him of how alone he felt. He longed for a sense of purpose, for someone to share his life with, but the emptiness seemed to swallow him whole.

Wilson's whine brought him back to reality. Wilson's head tilted to the side, his big eyes staring at his owner with a mix of concern and confusion. Will had been clearly depressed for quite some time, and Wilson knew that he had to do something about it. He couldn't bear to see his owner fall back into the deep sadness that he had been struggling with for months. Wilson's paws fidgeted on the floor as he tried to think of ways to cheer Will up. Maybe they could go for a walk in the park, or play fetch in the backyard. Wilson was determined to bring some joy back into Will's life, and he was willing to do whatever it took to make it happen, but will couldnt bring himself to get up, not even to pet him.

Will slumped back down, Winston jumped up on the couch and nuzzled into his owner. Will absentmindedly stroked Wilson's fur, grateful for the dog's comforting presence. He knew he couldn't stay like this forever, wallowing in self-pity and despair. He needed to take action, to make a change in his life for the better. But the thought of doing so was daunting, and he didn't know where to start. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath, feeling overwhelmed by the weight of the world on his shoulders. The stress of his daily routine was too much to bear, and he couldn't keep going like this. As he tried to focus on his breathing, Will's mind began to wander, considering the different ways he could escape this pressure. Despite his initial resistance to the idea of disappearing, he couldn't help but wonder if it might be the only way to find true peace and solitude. These thoughts swirled around in his head as he tried to regain control of his racing heart and calm his troubled mind.

Will sat there the weight of his thoughts crushing down on him. He was stunned by the rapidity with which he had formulated a plan to end it all. It was almost as if he had been waiting for this moment his entire life. His hand instinctively reached for his gun, a cold metal comfort that he knew would end everything with a single pull of the trigger.

But then, as if from a distance, he heard the sound of the river. The gentle burble of water rushing over rocks and the soft rustle of leaves in the breeze. Something about it called out to him, tempting him with the promise of escape. He could go to the river, let the cool water wash over him, and just let the river take him away. It would be easy, effortless, and people might just chalk it up to another episode.

As he stood there, weighing his options, Will couldn't help but wonder how he had gotten to this point. How had his life spiraled so far out of control so quickly that he was now contemplating such drastic measures? He thought of his family, his friends, and all the people who cared about him. Could he really leave them all behind like this?

With a deep breath, he holstered his gun and turned towards Winston. He hesitated for a moment, his eyes heavy with the weight of what had just happened. The adrenaline that had been coursing through his veins was now replaced with a sense of exhaustion.

“I couldn't do it to ya buddy,” Will said, his voice barely above a whisper. He knew that he had made the right decision, but it still weighed heavily on him. Winston looked back at him, his eyes filled with a mixture of understanding and concern.

Will decided that he couldn't make the effort to get up and go to bed, so he just let himself fall asleep right there, in his day clothes.

Lethal.

Chapter Summary

Hannibal's intense emotions and memories resurface as he confronts his feelings for Will and struggles with past trauma. Hannibal realizes that he needs to talk to Will about his emotions and come to terms with them, but he is hesitant to share his thoughts with anyone. He is reminded of his past trauma every time he thinks of Will, and he struggles to work through his complex emotions in order to continue with him.

Hannibal's body shook violently as he was suddenly thrust back into a vivid flashback of that fateful night over 40 years ago in Lithuania. He was no longer in his office, but instead, he was back on that street, surrounded by drunk men and the sound of laughter. The memories came flooding back, taking control of his emotions like it was real.

He tried to shake himself out of it, to come back to the present, but the flashback was too strong. He could feel the cold, damp ground beneath him and the roughness of the wall he was pushed up against.

Hannibal felt overwhelmed by the intensity of the memories and the emotions that came with them. It was a moment of intense vulnerability, where Hannibal's strength was tested to the limits. He closed his eyes and bore his teeth down, trying to hold back the pain that wracked his body.

Eventually, the flashback faded, and Hannibal was back in his office, his body trembling with the aftershocks of the memory. He took a deep breath and tried to calm himself down, reminding himself that he was safe and that the past was in the past.

Hannibal stood up, trying to calm himself down. He was desperately analyzing himself, wondering why Will had made these feelings resurface. The truth was, he had thought he had gotten over them, but now he found himself struggling once again. As he paced back and forth, he couldn't help but wonder if he would ever be able to look at Will and not feel this way. He wished he could just forget the past and move on, but it seemed that his feelings for Will ran much deeper than he had ever realised and this triggered his internal feelings toward his sexuality.

Hannibal felt a pang of guilt wash over him, he knew he couldn't deny the fact that he was attracted to Will, but he also knew that he couldn't just abandon the memory of what happened to him.

Hannibal took a deep breath and decided that he needed to talk to Will about everything he was feeling. He couldn't keep these feelings bottled up inside forever, and he knew that he

could trust Will to understand. It was time to confront his emotions and come to terms with them, no matter how difficult it might be.

Hannibal's hands trembled as he fumbled for the key to unlock his cabinet. His heart was racing and he was feeling a mix of emotions that he wasn't used to. He had never felt this way towards anyone before, and it both scared and excited him. Finally, the cabinet doors swung open, revealing the array of drugs, files, and weapons that he had collected over the years. Hannibal's mind was racing with thoughts that he knew were irrational, and he realized that he needed to take a step back and collect himself. As a licensed psychiatrist, Hannibal knew that he shouldn't be having these thoughts.

As he stood there, staring at the contents of his cabinet, Hannibal couldn't help but wonder if he was losing his grip on reality. He knew that he needed to get a grip on his emotions and his thoughts before they consumed him completely. Hannibal had an almost encyclopedic knowledge the of various drugs, including their effects on the human body and the different methods of administration. He was meticulous in his research and knew every detail about each drug, down to the smallest component. He could easily determine the lethal dosage of any given drug and the most effective way to administer it. Whether it was through injection or ingestion, Hannibal knew exactly how to deliver the deadly dose. He had never really thought about them for himself though.

Hannibal shook his head, trying to clear his thoughts. He knew that he couldn't keep going down this path, that he needed to focus on the present and the task at hand. He was hesitant to share his thoughts with anyone. Nevertheless, he knew that he had the option of reaching out to Will to discuss his concerns. Perhaps a conversation with Will could provide him with clarity and a sense of direction. He was uncertain, however, as to whether or not he could trust Will with these personal matters. This was uncharted territory for him, as he had never discussed his innermost thoughts with anyone before. Despite his knowledge that he ought to call, he could not bring himself to do it. He was too afraid of rejection, too uncertain of what would happen next. Besides, he had always felt like an outsider, like he didn't truly belong anywhere, and the thought of reaching out only to be met with indifference or hostility was almost too much to bear. And yet, he couldn't shake the feeling that he was missing out on something important. That the connection he had felt with Will was something special, something worth fighting for.

Every time he thought of Will and where their relationship might lead, Hannibal was reminded of his past. Hannibal questioned why his mind failed to let him pursue this, even though he was eager to be with Will. Perhaps it was the fear of being hurt again, the fear of losing control over his emotions. Hannibal was convinced that Will would not hurt him, but the emotions he felt in Will's presence only served to remind him of the pain he had experienced in the past. Despite his rational mind telling him that Will was not a threat, Hannibal could not shake the feeling of vulnerability that permeated his every interaction with the other man. Memories of past trauma flooded his mind, and he found himself constantly on edge, waiting for the other shoe to drop. Hannibal knew that he needed to work through these complex emotions if he ever hoped to continue with Will, but the journey ahead seemed daunting and uncertain.

Tails.

Chapter Summary

Alana offers support and reassurance to will as he acknowledges his feelings.

Will had been exhausted from the day before and had slept soundly until the next morning. He would have continued to doze if he hadn't felt a cool sensation on his face and heard muffled barking in the background. Winston, his loyal companion, was standing on his leg, wagging his tail vigorously and licking his face. Even though Will was still groggy, he couldn't help but smile at the sight of his beloved dog. As he became more alert, he noticed his other dogs barking loudly in the background, but their noise was quickly silenced by a woman's voice. Will's exhaustion had kept him pinned down for what felt like hours. He could barely open his eyes, but he was aware of his surroundings. He heard his door creak open and then close, and he saw his dogs scamper towards a silhouette that had just entered the room. The fact that his dogs were wagging their tails and eagerly greeting the person reassured him that it was someone he knew and trusted.

“Will?” the person approached him and placed the back of her hand on his forehead, checking his temperature with concern. “It’s Alana. Can you hear me?” Will pushed her hand away and grunted, rolling his head around.

“Tired.” he groaned, finally starting to wake up slightly. Alana sighed, sitting next to him and turning her torso towards him.

“Sorry for stopping by unannounced. I just wanted to check up on you. I haven't heard from you in a while and I was worried.” She tried to initiate him into expressing some signs of life, hoping that he would open up to her.

Will opened his eyes fully and looked at Alana, noticing how concerned she looked. He smiled weakly and put a hand on her arm.

“Thanks for coming by, Alana. You didn't have to.”

She shook her head. “Of course I did. We're friends, Will. Friends look out for each other.”

Will nodded slowly, feeling a sense of gratitude wash over him for her presence. He paused for a moment, taking a deep breath as he tried to gather his emotions. Memories of the past few days came flooding back to him, and he couldn't help but feel a lump form in his throat. Despite his best efforts, the tears were welling up in his eyes, the warmth spreading across his cheeks. He was thankful that she was there for him, providing a sense of comfort and stability in a time of turmoil.

As he slowly opened his eyes again, he turned his gaze towards her. She could see that his eyes were becoming glazed over and she noticed his eyebrows beginning to waver. She instinctively pulled him closer to her, trying to comfort him as much as she could.

“It’s okay,” she whispered, as she gently rocked him back and forth while he cried. She continued to mumble reassurances, hoping to soothe him in some small way. “Will, you should call him.”

Will pulled back slightly and looked at her, a confused expression on his face. “What do you mean?” he sniffled.

“Do you love him, Will?” she asked, her tone gentle but insistent. Although he never said yes outright, his sudden outburst of emotions made it clear to Alana that he had feelings for him. She waited patiently, hoping that he would eventually open up to her and share his true feelings.

Will hesitated for a moment, unsure of how to respond. He had been struggling with his feelings for a while now, and the thought of admitting them to someone else made him feel vulnerable. But looking at Alana's kind and understanding expression, he knew she wouldn't judge him. He took a deep breath and nodded slowly.

"I do. I love him," he finally admitted, his voice barely above a whisper. Alana smiled softly and squeezed his hand, offering him a small measure of comfort.

"I'm glad you're being honest with yourself," she said, a gentle smile on her face. They sat in comfortable silence for a while, the only sounds coming from the chirping birds outside. As the silence stretched on, she couldn't help but ask the question that had been nagging at her. "Are you gay?"

He stumbled over his words, his uncertainty evident in the way he spoke. "Huh, what? No, um, well I don't know. Maybe," he finally managed to say, his voice barely above a whisper. He'd never really thought about it before, but her question had planted a seed of doubt in his mind. He was aware of his attraction to men, but he was uncertain about his feelings for women. He often found himself pondering the idea of being in a relationship with a woman and wondered what it would be like. He thought about the differences between men and women, and how those differences might affect a relationship. He considered the possibility of having a family with a woman, and how that would differ from having a family with a man. Despite these thoughts, he still felt a stronger attraction to men and wasn't sure if he would ever be able to fully reciprocate feelings for a woman.

As she said those two words, "Me too," there was an immediate sense of relief that washed over her. It was as if a heavy weight had been lifted off her shoulders, and for the first time in a long while, she felt like she could breathe again. She slumped back next to him, feeling the comfort of his warm presence next to her. She couldn't help but let out a small laugh, surprised at how good it actually felt to finally say those words out loud. Will, who had been sitting next to her all along, sat up and looked at her with a gentle smile. His eyes were warm and understanding, and she felt grateful for his presence in that moment. He too sat back, nodding in agreement with her, and the two of them sat there in comfortable silence, feeling a sense of shared understanding and support.

As Will spoke, his voice was thick with emotion. "I just can't help how I feel," he said to Alana. "I love him. It's like a constant ache in my chest that never goes away, no matter how hard I try to ignore it or move on. I know it's not healthy, and it hurts me to admit it, but I can't help it." He paused, taking a deep breath and wiping away a tear.

Alana put a hand on his shoulder, offering him a small measure of comfort. "It's okay to feel that way, Will," she said softly. "You can't control who you love. It's natural and normal to have these feelings."

Will nodded slowly, feeling a sense of relief wash over him at her words. He knew deep down that she was right, but it still felt frightening to admit his feelings out loud. He took a deep breath and leaned back against the couch, feeling exhausted and emotionally drained.

As he sat there, lost in thought, Alana placed a hand on his arm, bringing him back to the present. "You know, Will, you don't have to go through this alone," she said gently. "There are people who love and support you, no matter what. You just have to be brave enough to reach out to them."

Will nodded slowly, taking in her words. He knew that she was right, but the idea of opening up to others about his feelings still scared him. He felt like he had been hiding a part of himself for so long, and the thought of exposing that vulnerability to others made him feel exposed and raw. But as he looked at Alana's kind and understanding expression, he knew that he could trust her. He took a deep breath and nodded.

"Thank you, Alana," he said softly. "I appreciate your support."

Winston loudly at their feet. He was clearly overjoyed to see Wills mood improving, as his tail wagged back and forth, making a swishing sound against the wooden floor. “"You too, pup. I appreciate you too.”

Doors.

Chapter Summary

Will confronts Hannibal about his recent distant behavior.

After Will opened up to Alana about his affliction, he felt a sense of relief. It was comforting to know that he had someone to talk to about what he was going through. Although nothing concrete came out of it, just being able to share his thoughts and feelings with someone else freed up a small corner of his mind that he didn't realize was occupied before. It was as if a weight had been lifted off his shoulders, and he felt more at ease with himself and his situation. Additionally, having someone to confide in gave him the strength to explore his feelings in more depth, and he began to understand himself better. Slowly but surely, he began to feel more in control of his life, and less like a victim of circumstance.

Will had been pondering for days about how to approach Hannibal. He knew he needed to have a conversation with him. However, he also realized that Hannibal was going through a difficult time and needed support. As he walked towards Hannibal's office, he thought about the right words to say. After a few deep breaths, Will knocked on the door and waited for Hannibal to invite him in.

Wills excitement was palpable as he waited for Hannibal to open the door. Time seemed to slow down as he anticipated the moment he would finally lay eyes on his friend. When Hannibal finally appeared, Will couldn't help but notice that something was off. His usually impeccable appearance was slightly disheveled, with his hair slightly out of place and his clothes slightly disorganized. These details were so minor that Will had to strain his trained eye to notice them. However, his sharp intuition told him that Hannibal's agitation ran deeper than his appearance.

As they settled into Hannibal's living room, Will couldn't help but feel a sense of unease. Hannibal's usually calm and collected demeanor was replaced with a sense of restlessness. Will couldn't quite put his finger on what was bothering his friend, but he knew that something was wrong. Despite their usual easy rapport, the conversation felt strained and stilted.

After a few minutes of awkward silence, Hannibal finally spoke up, his voice tinged with frustration. As he began to speak, Will realized that there was much more to Hannibal's agitation than he had initially thought. Hannibal's problems ran deep, and Will knew that it would take time and patience to help his friend work through them.

Hannibal's body language spoke volumes to Will. He could sense Hannibal's discomfort and unease, even if the other man tried to hide it. Will was always attuned to the people around him, especially those he was investigating. He had learned to read body language like a book,

and Hannibal was no exception. Will could tell that there was something more going on beneath the surface, something that Hannibal was trying to hide. As he watched Hannibal skirt away, Will couldn't help but wonder what secrets lay buried in the man's past. Perhaps it was time to dig a little deeper and find out.

Will couldn't help but wonder if Hannibal's issue with him was his own fault or if there was something else at play. Perhaps he had said something that Hannibal had misinterpreted, or maybe Hannibal was simply struggling with some personal issues that had nothing to do with Will. It was hard to know for sure, and the uncertainty was eating away at Will. He spent countless hours analyzing every interaction he had ever had with Hannibal, trying to pinpoint the moment when things had started to go wrong. Despite his efforts, he couldn't identify any obvious missteps on his part. At this point, Will was beginning to suspect that there was more going on than met the eye.

Will shuffled nervously and stimmed with the cuff of his shirt sleeve. This was a familiar feeling, one that had been with him for years. He had always been anxious around Hannibal, unsure of what the other man was thinking or feeling. But tonight, something felt different. Hannibal had been distant lately, and Will couldn't help but wonder if he had done something to cause it.

“Hannibal, listen.” Will took a deep breath, trying to calm his racing thoughts. “Did I do something?”

Hannibal raised an eyebrow, a small smile playing at the corners of his mouth. "What makes you think that?"

“You’ve been distant lately," Will continued, "and when you’ve been around you’ve been guarded and uncomfortable. I don't like it Hannibal, I want you to talk to me. Tell me what's going on in your mind."

Hannibal's expression softened slightly. He reached out and placed a comforting hand on Will's shoulder. "I apologize, Will. I didn't realize my behavior was affecting you so deeply."

Will shook his head, his eyes searching for the right words to say. He didn't want to push Hannibal too much, but at the same time, he couldn't help but feel like he deserved some answers. "I just...I don't understand what's going on," he said, his voice trailing off uncertainly. He let out a heavy sigh, feeling defeated and frustrated all at once. He didn't expect Hannibal to answer, but he couldn't help but hope.

Hannibal seemed to sense Will's hesitation and walked over to the two chairs in his office. He sat down opposite his usual seat, a small gesture that spoke volumes to Will. Hannibal was willing to listen and answer any questions Will had, no matter how difficult they may be. Will felt his frustration slowly come down as he started to speak, his words tumbling out in a jumbled mess. Hannibal listened patiently, offering reassurance and guidance when he could. As the conversation continued, Will found himself opening up more and more, feeling grateful for the chance to finally be heard.

"I apologize, Will. My business should not have had an impact on you," Hannibal said with a sigh. He sat up straighter in his chair, his body tense with stress. "The truth is, I have been

under a great deal of pressure lately. Between managing my practice and dealing with some personal issues, I have not been as present as I should have been."

He paused, searching for the right words. "I hope you can understand that I never meant for any of this to happen. I value our friendship and our professional relationship more than anything else. If there is anything I can do to make it up to you, please let me know."

Will nodded, still feeling somewhat unsettled. He appreciated Hannibal's honesty, but he couldn't shake the feeling that there was more going on beneath the surface.

"I appreciate your candor," he said finally. "And I understand that things have been difficult for you. But I would appreciate it if you could be more transparent with me in the future. That way, we can avoid any misunderstandings like this one."

Hannibal nodded, a small smile playing at the corners of his mouth. "Of course, Will. I will do my best to keep you in the loop from now on."

Will often found it difficult for him to differentiate between his own emotions and the emotions of those around him. In the case of Hannibal, Will's empathic abilities may be contributing to his feelings of anxiety and unhappiness. He may be picking up on the underlying stress and discomfort that Hannibal is experiencing, even if Hannibal is trying to hide it.

Hannibal, a tall and imposing figure, rose from his seat and straightened his tie before approaching Will, his steps measured and deliberate. As he drew closer, Will could feel the weight of Hannibal's presence bearing down on him, filling the room with an aura of tense energy. Hannibal's piercing gaze seemed to bore into Will, as if searching for something hidden deep within his mind. Finally, after what felt like an eternity, Hannibal spoke, his voice low and smooth as silk. "Will?" he said, his tone almost a whisper. "I believe we have much to discuss. How about over dinner?”

Magnets.

Chapter Summary

A dinner between Will and Hannibal, where they discuss their pasts and their growing attraction to each other. As the night goes on, their desire for each other grows stronger, but they both know that they need to be careful.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will glanced up from his plate, taking a moment to collect his thoughts before speaking. He had always known that dinner with Hannibal was an intimate affair, but he didn't quite expect it to be like this. The dim lighting and the elegant decor of the dining room only served to heighten the sense of closeness between them. As their conversation drifted from one topic to another, Will couldn't help but feel a sense of comfort in Hannibal's presence. It was as if they had known each other for years, despite only having met recently. The food was exquisite, but the real pleasure came from the company. Hannibal's piercing gaze seemed to delve into Will's soul, but rather than being unsettling, it was strangely comforting. As the night went on, Will found himself opening up to Hannibal, revealing parts of himself that he had never shared with anyone before. By the end of the meal, he felt as if he had formed a connection with Hannibal that repaired the bonds broken recently.

Hannibal let out a deep sigh, his eyes cast downwards for a moment before meeting Will's gaze once again. "Listen, Will," he said slowly, enunciating each word, "I want you to understand that what happened wasn't your fault." Will nodded, but Hannibal could see the uncertainty in his eyes. "I know it's hard to believe that, but it's true," he continued. "Sometimes things happen that are beyond our control, and all we can do is try our best to deal with them. That's what you did, Will. You tried your best." Hannibal's voice was soft, reassuring. Will took a deep breath, trying to absorb his words. "Thank you," he finally said, his voice barely above a whisper. "You're welcome," Hannibal replied, a small smile appearing on his lips.

“I was around 14. I had little social life, my friends consisted of the animals in the grounds and my sister. It was in the transition between autumn and winter, not so cold you needed a coat yet not warm enough to leave unprepared for the chill.” Hannibal sighed with a heavy face as he retold the story. Will listened contently, knowing the answer to Hannibal's distance would be associated with this story.

Will listened closer to his story learning about how Hannibal had a close friend named Moze, who he met when he was just a young boy. Despite initially feeling hostile towards Moze, Hannibal soon grew to tolerate his presence. Over time, however, that tolerance turned into something more. Hannibal didn't realize it at the time, but he had grown to love Moze dearly.

As Hannibal took a sip of his wine, he reminisced about how he and Moze would often spend hours in the forest near their home. They would watch the leaves change color and listen to the sounds of the animals around them. For Hannibal, it was a peaceful escape from the rest of the world, where he could be alone with his thoughts and the natural beauty around him. He even started to develop a special bond with some of the animals, particularly a family of deer that would often graze nearby.

As time passed, Hannibal's love for Moze only grew stronger. He found himself seeking out Moze's company more and more, and the two became nearly inseparable. Hannibal cherished every moment he spent with Moze, and he was grateful to have found someone who truly understood him.

Will took a brief moment to contemplate Hannibal's words, his eyes wandering over to the man who had paused his monologue. As Hannibal spoke of his relationship with Moze, Will couldn't help but feel a sense of familiarity. It was almost as if the two men were reflections of himself, and he found himself wondering if there was more to their bond than what Hannibal was willing to reveal. Perhaps there were hidden layers to their connection that even Hannibal himself was not aware of. Will couldn't help but feel curious about what lay beneath the surface of their relationship, and he resolved to delve deeper into the matter. Perhaps by doing so, he could gain a better understanding of himself and his own relationships as well.

Looking back on those days now, Hannibal couldn't help but smile. His friendship with Moze had been one of the most important things in his life, and he would always treasure the memories they had created together.

“One night Mischa had an extravagant idea in mind for a dinner,” Hannibal began, his voice tinged with nostalgia. “I remember it well. She was so excited about creating this particular dish, and had already gone to great lengths to procure some of the ingredients. But then she discovered that she was missing a few key items, and that’s when she came to me, tears in her eyes.”

Despite Hannibal’s reassurances that she could just cook something else, Mischa was determined to make this specific dish, no matter what. It was this kind of unwavering determination that Hannibal admired in his sister, and he saw a similar trait in Will.

“You and her are alike in that way,” Hannibal remarked with a small smile, though a hint of sadness lingered in his tone.

"So, I was tasked with a mission to go out into the town and retrieve what she needed," Hannibal's voice quavered with a sense of unease, barely perceptible but still audible. Will was apprehensive about Hannibal's state of mind. He knew that revisiting old memories could be a dangerous game, yet he was desperate to discover the innermost secrets of Hannibal.

As Hannibal continued his story, Will listened intently, taking in every detail. He could sense Hannibal's trepidation, but he knew that he had to keep pushing forward. Hannibal's past was shrouded in mystery, and Will was determined to unravel it.

Hannibal's voice grew softer as he recounted the events of that fateful day. Will could see the pain etched on Hannibal's face as he relived the memories. It was clear that this was a painful experience for him, but he soldiered on nonetheless.

Wills ribs began to ache, the pain coursing through him with each breath. He felt his chest constrict, as if someone had wrapped a vice around his lungs. A single tear escaped his eye, tracing down his cheek. He quickly wiped it away, not wanting Hannibal to see the effect his words had on him.

He took a deep breath and tried to steady himself. He knew he had to be strong, to keep his emotions in check. After all, he couldn't let Hannibal know. But it was hard. Hannibals story was a sensitive one and his words were strong, they had a way of cutting to the core of a person's emotions.

“I’m not sure how and why but that incident impacted the way I felt about other people, especially men, greatly. And Will, that means you…” Hannibal shifted in his chair, his gaze fixed on Will's eyes. Will couldn't help but feel a sense of apprehension, wondering what Hannibal was trying to say. His mind raced with possibilities, but he couldn't quite grasp what Hannibal was trying to tell him.

After a moment of silence, Will spoke up. "Hannibal, I think I know what you're trying to say," he said, his voice barely above a whisper. "I feel the same way."

Hannibal's eyes widened, a look of surprise crossing his face. But then, slowly but surely, a smile began to form on his lips. "I had a feeling," he said, his voice filled with warmth. "But I didn't want to assume anything."

For a moment, the two men sat in silence, the weight of the conversation hanging over them. But then, slowly but surely, they both began to relax. They started to talk about other things, laughing and joking as if nothing had changed. It was as if they had both been given a second chance, a chance to truly understand each other and accept each other for who they were.

Will had a moment to think, his mind wandering through the memories of his encounter with Hannibal where his lust for him was at full force. He recalled the way Hannibal's eyes sparkled with mischief as he started to undress him, the feeling of Hannibal's hands on his body, and the heat that spread through him with each touch. Will couldn't help but wish that it could've gone on forever, but now, he knew why it couldn’t.

Finally, he mustered up the courage to ask Hannibal the question that had been on his mind for weeks. "Hannibal, I want to ask you something about that night."

Hannibal simply nodded, a faint smile playing at the corner of his lips. "You may ask me anything, Will, but please understand that I may not answer if I deem it necessary."

"Do you remember taking my shirt off?" Will said bluntly.

"How could I forget?" Hannibal smiled.

"Was the reason you stopped there because of what you just told me?" Hannibal's smile faltered slightly, he took a minute to answer.

"Possibly. I can't even say myself," Hannibal said, pausing to consider his words. "The truth is, with the way we are together, combined with our pasts, it's hard to know what would happen if things went further. I think it's best we take things slowly and be mindful of the consequences of our actions. After all, we don't want to ruin what we have, do we?" Will nodded in agreement, feeling relieved that Hannibal was being honest with him. They both knew that their attraction to each other was strong, but they also knew that they needed to be careful not to let it consume them completely.

Their dinner began to eat late into the night, it eventually came to the end. Will helped Hannibal carry the dirty dishes into the kitchen.

As Will placed his dishes into the sink, his hand brushed past Hannibal's. He noticed how warm Hannibal's skin felt, and how his fingers were long and slender. Memories of their previous encounters flooded Will's mind, and he found himself wanting more. He let his hand linger, feeling Hannibal's fingers dance over his own. The tension between them was palpable, and Will wondered if he should make a move.

But then, as if sensing Will's thoughts, Hannibal withdrew his hand and stepped back. "I think it's time for us to retire for the night," he said, his voice soft but firm. Will nodded, feeling a sense of disappointment wash over him. As they made their way to their respective bedrooms, Will couldn't help but wonder what the future held for them. Would they ever be able to give into their desires, or would they forever be stuck in this limbo? Only time would tell, but for now, they both knew that they needed to be careful. As Will settled back into his room, he couldn't shake off the feeling of frustration that grew within him. The more he thought about it, the more he realized that it was his body's physical needs that were causing him to feel this way. He was craving Hannibal, and the thought of being near him ignited a strong desire within him.

Unable to resist his urges, Will left his room and made his way to Hannibal's door. When he entered, he caught Hannibal off guard, who was in the middle of getting undressed. Will powered towards Hannibal and wrapped his hand around the back of his head, pulling him in for a passionate kiss, allowing his body to fully indulge in the pleasure that Hannibal offered.

As they kissed, Will felt his body relax and his mind clear. He knew that he shouldn't be doing this, that it was wrong, but he couldn't help himself. The more he tasted Hannibal, the more he craved him, and the more he was willing to take a risk to satisfy his desires.Will drew back, looking at Hannibal. They locked eyes, and for a moment, neither of them spoke. Hannibal's gaze was intense, piercing through Will's defenses. Will's heart was racing, and he felt a mixture of desire and fear. He knew that he was playing with fire, but he couldn't help himself. With a nod, he turned to leave, but Hannibal's grip on his arm stopped him in his tracks.

"Stay," Hannibal whispered, his voice low and seductive. "We can't leave things like this."

Will hesitated for a moment, but then he turned back to Hannibal. He knew that he was taking a risk, but he couldn't resist the pull that Hannibal had on him. They kissed again, their

bodies pressed together, their breathing ragged and urgent. It was as if they were the only two people in the world, lost in their own private universe of desire and longing. For a moment, nothing else mattered except the heat of their bodies and the intense connection between them.

Hannibal walked back and stood in front of his closet. He took off his shirt, revealing the scars on his back. It was clear that the man had been through some tough times. "You're welcome to spend the night in here," Hannibal said “But do not expect anything from it," Hannibal added, a sincere smile on his face. Will perched on the edge of his bed, sighing loudly at the last statement but understanding it.

Will undressed slowly, his eyes never leaving Hannibal's form as he followed suit. As Hannibal's clothing fell away, Will couldn't help but notice the abundance of scars that littered his body, proof of a lifetime of experiences that Will could only imagine.

As the two men stood before each other, Will's gaze traveled the length of Hannibal's toned physique, taking in every inch of the man he yearned for so desperately. He couldn't help but imagine what it would feel like to run his hands over Hannibal's muscles, to feel the heat of his skin against his own.

Despite the intensity of his desire, Will forced himself to remain composed. He knew that any misstep could ruin the delicate balance between them, and he couldn't risk losing the chance to be with Hannibal.

Hannibal and Will lay next to each other. Will wore a shirt and shorts, while Hannibal donned long trousers. It was unusual for Will to wear a shirt, but he felt insecure about his body and didn't want to be scrutinized. Hannibal, on the other hand, seemed more comfortable in his own skin. The room was silent, but the energy between them was palpable. As they lay there, they both knew that this was just the beginning of a new chapter in their lives. They were both excited and scared, but they knew that they had each other to rely on.

Their faces were so close that they could feel each other's breath on their lips, the room was dimly lit and cozy. Will's heart was beating faster and faster as he looked into Hannibal's mesmerizing eyes, and he longed for Hannibal to finally touch him, to feel Hannibal's warm embrace and let his own passion ignite. The anticipation was almost too much to bear.

Hannibal slowly raised his hand, his fingers stretching out until they rested on Will's chest. As he tilted his head, his eyes glinted with a subtle hint of amusement. He could feel the warmth of the other man's skin beneath his own, and he wondered how Will might react to the sudden contact. Would he push him away, or would he lean in closer? Hannibal found himself fascinated by the possibilities. Perhaps it was the thrill of the unknown that made this moment so enticing, or maybe it was something else entirely. Regardless, Hannibal knew that he wanted to explore this new sensation further. So he hesitated only briefly before pressing his palm more firmly against Will's chest, relishing in the way the muscles twitched beneath his touch.

Will gently placed his hand upon Hannibal's, feeling the warmth and comfort of his touch. Hannibal reciprocated the gesture, and Will couldn't help but embrace him tightly. As he held Hannibal close, he lead hannibals hand down his arm and eventually found its way to his

waistband. A shiver ran down Hannibal's spine as he felt Will's touch, and he couldn't help but smile at the younger man.

Despite the overwhelming attraction between the two, they knew that they needed to take things slow. Hannibal gently removed his hand from Will's grasp and placed it on the young man's cheek, stroking it softly. Will leaned in, hoping to steal a kiss, but Hannibal's other hand had already found its way between them.

"William," Hannibal said softly, "you need sleep."

Will knew that Hannibal was right, but he couldn't help the way he felt. As he lay down next to Hannibal, he couldn't shake the desire that burned within him. Perhaps tomorrow, he thought to himself, they could explore their feelings further. For now, he would rest, content in the knowledge that Hannibal was by his side.

Chapter End Notes

A concise and cute name, Moze. Although it sounds short and casual, it has a profound meaning: “saved from the water.”
A reference to Will's accident in the river and his connection to water on top of the fact both hannibal and will need constant saving.

Sheets.

Chapter Summary

A passionate encounter between Will and Hannibal. Despite the danger of their relationship, they can't resist each other and spend the morning wrapped up in each other's arms. Will feels a sense of liberation and completeness that he has never experienced before, and he never wants to let go of Hannibal.

Will woke up early, feeling surprisingly refreshed considering how little sleep he had gotten the night before. As he slowly came to his senses, he realized that he was sprawled out across Hannibal's bed. One arm was draped over Hannibal's waist, and Will's head was comfortably resting on Hannibal's chest, where he could hear the steady rhythm of his heartbeat.

He felt a sense of warmth and safety that he hadn't felt in a long time, and a small smile tugged at the corners of his lips. He didn't want to move, didn't want to disturb the peacefulness of the moment, but he knew that he eventually had to get up and face the day. For now, though, he was content to stay right where he was.

Hannibal woke up shortly after Will, his eyes adjusting to the morning light filtering through the window. As he shifted his weight slightly, he let out a small sigh and brought his hand up to gently stroke Will's hair, admiring the way the sunlight played with the strands.

He savoured this moment, knowing that it wouldn't last forever. Eventually, they would have to get up and face the day, with all its challenges and responsibilities. But for now, he was content to simply be with Will, enjoying the warmth of his body and the sound of his breathing. He closed his eyes and breathed in deeply, feeling a sense of peace and contentment that he had not felt in a long time.

Will slowly moved his head to adjust his gaze and peered intently at Hannibal, his eyebrows furrowed in concentration. He took in the man's features, noting the sharp angles of his cheekbones and the intense glint in his eyes. As he studied him, memories from their past encounters flooded his mind, reminding him of the complex relationship they had shared.

Will's fingers trailed along Hannibal's oblique muscles, his fingers following the natural flow of Hannibal's muscles. He couldn't help but marvel at the sculpted physique before him. It was a true testament of Hannibal's dedication to his physical fitness. Will couldn't help but wonder what other hidden talents Hannibal possessed, beyond his impeccable physique. As Will continued, he ran his fingers along the middle of his abs. He took a deep breath and noticed how his chest rose and fell with each inhale and exhale. He then moved his hands up to his collar bones, feeling the slight bump of each bone beneath his skin.

Will sat up, his eyes taking in Hannibal's well-defined physique. He couldn't help but admire the sharp lines of his features, the way his hair fell in soft waves against his forehead. Hannibal was awake, but his eyes remained closed, a contented smile tugging at his lips. Will couldn't resist the urge to move closer, his legs dangling over the edge of the bed as he leaned in.

He positioned himself above Hannibal, his thighs straddling Hannibal's lean hips. Despite his toned body, Hannibal was surprisingly slender, and Will could feel the jut of his hipbones beneath his weight. He took a moment to savor the sensation, the way Hannibal's body felt beneath him.

Suddenly feeling a bit self-conscious, Will shifted his weight, pulling back slightly. He wasn't sure if Hannibal was fully awake yet, and he didn't want to make things awkward. But as he looked down at Hannibal's peaceful expression, he felt a small smile tug at the corners of his own lips. It was moments like these that made him feel truly alive.

Will leaned over, slowly and carefully, taking Hannibal's face into his hands. He gazed deeply into Hannibal's eyes, feeling the warmth of their love spread through his body. Will let his lips linger on Hannibal's for a moment longer, savoring the intimacy of the moment. As they pulled away, Hannibal looked at Will with a soft smile. Hannibal's hands were placed gently on Will's hips as he sat on top of him, his eyes locked onto Will's with a fierce intensity. Will couldn't help but feel a shiver run down his spine as he met Hannibal's gaze, his own eyes filled with a mix of fear and desire. The room was silent except for the sound of their breathing, and Will could feel the tension building between them. Hannibal leaned in closer, his breath hot against Will's cheek. Suddenly, Will felt Hannibal's lips brush against his neck, sending a wave of pleasure through his body. As Hannibal continued to kiss him, Will's mind raced with a million different thoughts and emotions, all swirling together in a dizzying mix. He knew that this was wrong, that he shouldn't be giving into his desires like this, but he couldn't stop himself. Hannibal was addictive and once he got a taste of him, he knew he would never be able to let him go.

Will closed his eyes and let out a shuddering breath as Hannibal's lips moved down his neck, leaving a trail of kisses in their wake. He knew that he shouldn't be giving into his desires like this, but he couldn't help himself. Hannibal was like a drug, and he was hopelessly addicted. As they continued to explore each other's bodies, Will knew that there was no going back.

Hannibal, with his muscular arms, lifted Will with ease and cradled him like a small child, rolling him over to lay beside him. From this new position, Hannibal was able to exert more force in their passionate kisses, which only served to heighten their already palpable chemistry. Will's fingers ran through Hannibal's hair, their touch both tender and possessive, as they lost themselves in the moment. Hannibal relished in the feel of Will's strong grip on his hair, a physical manifestation of their emotional connection.

As they lay there, wrapped up in each other, the world seemed to fade away. They were in their own little bubble, where nothing else mattered but the two of them. Will knew that this was dangerous, that he was playing with fire by getting involved with Hannibal. But in that

moment, he couldn't bring himself to care. All he wanted was to be with Hannibal, to feel his touch and to bask in the warmth of his love.

Will's attraction to Hannibal had taken over, and he couldn't help but grab Hannibal's body with a force that surprised even himself. Hannibal, though initially tense at this sudden display of desire, quickly succumbed to Will's passion. As they continued their passionate affair, Will's hands began to wander lower down Hannibal's body. Hannibal's mind warned him of the danger, and he subtly tensed up. Eventually, Hannibal's instincts took over and he grabbed Will's hands tightly, bringing them back up to his chest to stop the kisses.

Hannibal took a deep breath before looking up at Will, his eyes searching for any signs of disappointment or anger. The room was quiet, the only sound coming from the gentle hum of the air conditioning unit. He knew he had to say something, but the words were stuck in his throat.

"Sorry," he finally managed to choke out, feeling the weight of his guilt heavy on his chest. Will didn't say anything, but he reached out and placed a hand on Hannibal's face, his touch gentle and reassuring.

"It's okay," Will said softly, his voice barely above a whisper. "If you're not ready, we don't have to do this right now. We have plenty of time, Hannibal. I'm not going anywhere."

Hannibal let out a sigh of relief, feeling the tension in his body start to ease as he leaned into Will's touch. He knew that Will was right - they had all the time in the world. There was no need to rush things, not when they had each other. They could take things slow, explore new boundaries, and discover what it really meant to be together.

As he looked into Will's eyes, Hannibal felt a wave of gratitude wash over him. He was lucky to have someone like Will in his life, someone who understood him in a way that no one else ever had. And as they sat there together, their bodies entwined, Hannibal knew that he was exactly where he was meant to be. After they kissed each other once again, Will took a step back and looked into Hannibal's eyes. He could see the hesitation and uncertainty within them, and he knew that it wasn't easy for Hannibal to place boundaries, especially when trauma was involved. Will was careful to make sure that Hannibal was comfortable, and he knew that he had to tread lightly. He gently placed his hand on Hannibal's cheek and whispered, "I know that this is difficult for you, but I want you to know that I am here for you, always." Hannibal's expression softened, and he leaned into Will's touch. They stood there for a few moments, just looking at each other, before Will took a step back and smiled. "Shall we continue?" he asked, and Hannibal nodded, a small smile spreading across his face. As they leaned in to continue, Will's phone rang, interrupting their moment. At first, Will tried to ignore the ringing, but Hannibal reached for the phone and handed it to him. Will answered the phone, and Hannibal continued to kiss him, now moving down to his neck and shoulders.

As Will answered the phone, Hannibal's kisses grew more intense, his lips moving down to his neck and shoulders. Will struggled to focus on the call as he felt Hannibal's hot breath against his skin, his body responding to the touch. He tried to push the distraction out of his mind and concentrate on Jack's urgent message, but it was impossible with Hannibal's lips on his skin.

"Will, are you there?" Jack's voice came through the phone, sounding impatient.

Will closed his eyes and took a deep breath before responding. "Yeah, Jack. Sorry, I'm here." The call continued for a while but eventually Will managed to wrap it up.

He hung up the phone and turned his attention back to Hannibal, who was now moving his kisses lower and lower down Will's body. Will's thoughts were a jumbled mess as he tried to focus on the case and push aside the desire that was building inside him. He knew that he had to remain focused, but it was getting harder and harder as Hannibal's hands roamed over his body.

Finally, Will couldn't take it anymore. He grabbed Hannibal by the shoulders and pulled him up to meet his lips, unable to resist the pull of their intense chemistry. The kiss was passionate and electric, sending shivers down Will's spine as he lost himself in the moment. He knew that he was playing with fire, but he didn't care. All he wanted was to be with Hannibal, to feel his touch and to bask in the warmth of his love.

As they pulled away from the kiss, Hannibal looked at Will with a fierce intensity, his eyes locked onto his with a mix of desire and fear. Will could feel the tension building between them, and he knew that he was walking a dangerous line. But in that moment, he couldn't bring himself to care. All he could think about was the passion that burned between them, and the desire that threatened to consume them both.

"Hannibal," Will whispered, his voice barely above a whisper. "We have to stop. I have to go."

Hannibal's expression shifted subtly, a glint of amusement in his eyes as he glanced at Will. "Of course, my dear Will," he said smoothly, his voice dripping with seductive charm. "But why rush? We have all morning." He leaned in closer, his breath hot against Will's cheek as he whispered, "We could make it last, enjoy every moment together."

Will's heart raced as he tried to resist the magnetic pull of Hannibal's gaze. He knew he should leave, but a part of him couldn't bear the thought of ending the intoxicating dance they had been engaged in for so long. He found himself leaning in, drawn to Hannibal's dangerous allure like a moth to a flame.

Hannibal's grin widened, a hint of triumph in his eyes as he saw Will's resolve faltering. "That's it, my dear Will," he murmured, his hand sliding up to cup Will's face. "Let go, and let me take care of you."

Hannibal resumed kissing Will with a sense of urgency, his mouth dangerously low and his tongue exploring every inch of Will's bosy. As his passion intensified, Hannibal's fingers began toying with the drawstrings of Will's shorts, slowly pulling them open. Will's body responded to Hannibal's touch, his heart racing with excitement as he felt Hannibal's hand slip inside his shorts. The sensation was overwhelming, and Will found himself lost in the heat of the moment, unable to resist Hannibal's advances.

As they lay together, Will knew that he was playing with fire. He couldn't resist the pull of their intense chemistry, and he knew that he was walking a dangerous line. But in that

moment, he couldn't bring himself to care. All he could think about was the passion that burned between them, and the desire that threatened to consume them both.

Will attempted to contain his eagerness, but the anticipation that led to this moment caused his excitement to take hold. He shifted his hips, encouraging Hannibal to continue. Will's mind raced with thoughts of what was to come; he had been waiting for this moment for what felt like an eternity. As Hannibal began to move, Will surrendered to the sensations that coursed through his body. Every touch, every movement, sent shivers down his spine. Will realized that this was what he had been missing, the feeling of being completely consumed by another person. His heart raced as he lost himself in the moment, grateful for every second that he spent with Hannibal.

Will lets out a soft moan, a sound that reflects his pleasure and satisfaction with the moment. He closes his eyes and savors the sensation of Hannibal's touch, feeling a sense of contentment and happiness that he hasn't experienced in a long time. He runs his fingers through Hannibal's hair, taking in the softness of the strands and the way they feel between his fingers. He can feel Hannibal's body responding to his touch, and the knowledge that he is bringing Hannibal pleasure only heightens his own desire.

As they continue to explore each other's bodies, Will feels a sense of liberation, as if all of his worries and fears have melted away. He knows that this is dangerous, that he is playing with fire by getting involved with Hannibal, but he can't bring himself to care. All he wants is to be with Hannibal, to feel his touch and to bask in the warmth of his love.

They spent most of the morning like this, entwined in each other's arms, the sheets clinging to their sweaty bodies. Hannibal had spent the most of the early hours exploring every inch of Will's body, savoring the taste and feel of him. Will had never felt so alive, so complete, as he did in Hannibal's arms.

Eventually, after what felt like an eternity, Hannibal convinced Will to get ready for work. Will reluctantly left the bed, but every time he walked past the bedroom, he couldn't resist stealing a kiss from Hannibal.

As he got dressed, Will couldn't help but think about all the time he had spent pining and wishing for this to happen. It was as if he had been living in black and white, and now he was seeing the world in vivid color. He felt like he had finally found his missing piece, and he never wanted to let go.

Twilight.

Chapter Summary

Will struggles as he copes with his mental health issues and the aftermath of a seizure. Hannibal provides support and comfort as Will's condition worsens while also touching upon his own issues.

It had been a few months since things with Hannibal had developed. Will had taken some time away to process his recent finding about Hannibal. His feelings for Hannibal couldn't be erased or even falter by learning of his secret hobby. Will had always been attracted to Hannibal's intelligence, his charm, and his impeccable taste in cuisine. The more Will thought about it, the more he realized how much he had missed Hannibal's company. He longed for the days when they would discuss philosophy and art over a fine meal. So, Will had a decision to make, and it wasn't an easy one. On the one hand, his moral compass was telling him to stay put and talk to Jack. On the other hand, he knew he had to go back. After some careful consideration, Will ultimately decided to go back, even though it went against his instincts.

In addition to Hannibal, Abigail was also involved. The newly-formed relationship between the young girl in both Hannibal and Will's lives needed some consistency, and going to Jack meant that Abigail would lose Hannibal and her own life. It was a difficult decision to make, but Will ultimately chose to protect Abigail, even if it meant putting himself in danger. He had grown fond of her and did not want to lose her, he saw potential in her, and believed that she could learn from him. Hannibal also recognized that Abigail was an important person in Will's life and he did not want to jeopardise their friendship.

Will returned to Hannibal's life, and they picked up where they left off, but things were not the same. There was a tension between them and it was clear that Will was struggling with his decision. Hannibal, on the other hand, was pleased to have Will back in his life and did not seem to have any reservations about what had happened. The dynamic between them had shifted, and it was unclear what the future would hold for them.

Will found solace in their makeshift family, each one of them as mismatched as the other and yet fitting together perfectly. He had never felt such a sense of belonging before, as if he had finally found a place where he could truly be himself. They spent their days together, laughing and talking, sharing stories of their past and dreams for the future. It was a welcome break from the constant stress and anxiety of his job, and he cherished every moment of it.

Hannibal, too, found comfort in their little group. Though he had always been a solitary figure, there was something about these people that drew him in. Perhaps it was their resilience in the face of adversity, or their unwavering loyalty to each other. Whatever it was, he knew that he needed them as much as they needed him.

But even as they enjoyed their newfound sense of family, Hannibal couldn't shake the feeling that something was brewing beneath the surface. The tranquility they had found was fragile, and he knew that it wouldn't last forever. He could sense the tension building inside will, the unspoken issues that still needed to be addressed. And he knew that when they finally surfaced, it would be a storm like no other.

Will was a man of sensitivity and gentleness, his empathetic nature often overpowering his own well-being. His problems were not just complex, but they were also vicious, having the ability to bring him down in one blow – one episode. Hannibal recognized the fragility of Will's mental state and made it his top priority to ensure Will's well-being was taken care of. However, while Hannibal's intentions were genuine, he also knew that his own interests and Abigail's interests were inextricably linked to solving Will's problems and keeping them at bay.

Will's problems, although deeply personal, were not isolated to just himself. The newly-formed relationship between Hannibal, Will, and Abigail meant that their lives were intertwined, and the consequences of one person's actions could have a significant impact on the others.

Will's problems were not just his own, and they had the power to bring down not just him but also those closest to him. Hannibal recognised this and made it his priority to protect Will and those around him. While his intentions were genuine, he also knew that solving Will's problems was in his own and Abigail's best interests. It remained to be seen how they would navigate the challenges ahead, but one thing was certain – they were in it together.

Hannibal was pleasantly surprised at how long it took Will to start slipping. Hannibal had been closely monitoring Will's mental state, and while he couldn't be sure if Will was actually coping as well as he seemed, he found the other man's resilience to be impressive. However, he couldn't help but notice certain signs that indicated Will was starting to unravel. Hannibal wondered how long Will would be able to maintain his composure before he broke completely under the weight of his repressed problems.

Everything had returned to normal, or at least what was considered normal for Will. After taking some time off from work, he was back at his job and was finally able to balance his personal life and work life fairly evenly. For a while, things seemed to be going well.

However, it wasn't until Jack had him back teaching that Will started to feel himself slipping back into old habits. Being back in the classroom stirred up memories and emotions that he thought he had left behind. Will approached his desk and felt the rough wood under his hands, dragging his fingers along the edge and wiping away the dust that had gathered during his absence.

Despite the changes, Will couldn't help but feel a sense of comfort in the familiarity of his surroundings. He had been away for some time and coming back to his old routine was a welcome sight. As he settled back into his teaching routine, his exhaustion slowly crept back in. It wasn't just down to his job, but also because he had a tendency to get overly involved with things. Despite the toll it took on his energy levels, he knew that he couldn't let his passion for the job fade away.

One day, as he was going through his class roster, he noticed a familiar name - the name of the student he had attacked. At first, he couldn't believe it. He never thought that he would see that student again, and he was surprised that they had decided to come back to his class. He was overcome with a mix of emotions - guilt, shame, and gratitude all rolled into one. On the one hand, he was ashamed of what he had done. He had let his emotions get the best of him, and he had hurt a student in the process. He knew that he had crossed a line, and he couldn't take it back. On the other hand, he was grateful that the student had decided to come back. It was a sign that they felt safe enough to return, despite what had happened.

As time passed, Will's mental state continued to deteriorate. The stress of his job, coupled with the weight of his personal problems, was taking its toll on him. He found himself struggling to get out of bed in the morning and to focus on his tasks throughout the day. His thoughts were consumed by his guilt and shame, and he felt like he was drowning in his own emotions.

Despite his worsening mental health, Will tried to carry on as normal. He didn't want to burden his friends with his problems, and he didn't want to let his job suffer. However, it was becoming increasingly difficult to keep up the façade. Hannibal had noticed the change in Will's behavior, and he became increasingly concerned about his friend's well-being.

Abigail watched as Hannibal pottered over Will, his concern for his friend growing with each passing day. Will had become increasingly distant, barely uttering a word to either of them when he was with them. During dinner, Will would simply stare down at his plate, occasionally shifting his food around, but never taking a bite. This had been going on for weeks, and Abigail and Hannibal were both worried about his well-being.

Hannibal tried his best to engage Will in conversation, but it was as if Will had retreated into himself. Whenever Will made any sort of response, Hannibal would compensate, desperately trying to encourage him to open up. In truth, Hannibal was scared. He didn't want to watch as Will slipped further and further away, unsure if he would ever come back.

Despite their best efforts, Will remained distant and uncommunicative. Every day, it seemed like his illness was spreading, taking a visible toll on his physical appearance. His face became increasingly sullen, and his body grew more and more fragile. Will's face was pale, with dark circles under his eyes. He had lost weight and his cheekbones were more prominent than before. His clothes seemed to hang more loosely from his frame, as he grew weaker and weaker. His eyes looked sunken and lacked their usual spark. To make matters worse, his hair had become greasy and unkempt, a reflection of his deteriorating condition. It was clear that his mental health issues were now taking a very visible toll on his physical appearance.

Despite his declining health, Will continued to push himself to the brink. He was determined not to let his problems consume him, but he was fighting a losing battle.

A sense of unease had settled among the students, who had started to express concerns to Jack, Alana, and Beverly. They had all noticed a marked change in Will's teaching style, which had become lacklustre and almost monochromatic. Previously, Will had been praised for his passion and love for his area of expertise. His unorthodox methods had been overlooked due to his skill. However, lately, he seemed to have lost his touch. Most of the time, he just sat behind his desk, mumbling through PowerPoint slides, and when he did try

to get up and move around, he would stumble and sway, lacking the energy to support his own body despite what little of it remained.

Will sat at the table, staring at his untouched plate. He knew he should eat something, but he didn't have the appetite. It wasn't that he didn't want to eat, it was just that he didn't enjoy living like this. He felt unresponsive to his own concerns and others, like an outsider to his own life. He barely remembered the day anymore - it all seemed like a blur. Will imagined that it wouldn't be hard to give up and roll over right now.

Will's physical state was concerning. His head was rolled back, obviously in pain. All of his muscles seemed to ache and twinge, making it difficult to find a comfortable position. His stomach felt as though it was eating itself, but even the thought of trying to eat something made the sensation worse. Will felt incredibly agitated, as though his very skeleton was trying to claw its way out of his skin.

Hannibal was in the middle of his meal when he sensed something off. A pungent odor wafted up to his nose, and he quickly recognized it. He turned to look at Will, whose eyes were fluttering closed as he slumped in his chair. Sweat glistened on his mottled face, and he let out a small wince.

"Abigail," Hannibal said, his voice low and urgent. "Please step outside."

Abigail quickly rose from her seat, her heart pounding in her chest. She couldn't help but feel worried about Will, but also curious as to what was going on. She crossed her arms, trying to calm her nerves.

Hannibal approached Will, his expression tense as he reached out to feel the younger man's forehead. It was hot to the touch, and Hannibal furrowed his brow in concern. He couldn't let Will have a seizure here, not in front of Abigail.

"What's happening?" Abigail asked, feeling a little left out of the conversation.

"Abigail. Now is not the time. Leave now," Hannibal commanded, his tone firm but not unkind. He shot a look at Abigail, unhappy with her disobedience. He didn't want her witnessing one of Will's seizures. Hannibal knew that he needed to keep Abigail safe, even if it meant keeping her in the dark about certain things.

Will turned his head slowly, his neck stiff and tense. He could feel the muscles in his back knotting up as he struggled to sit upright. As he looked over at Hannibal, his eyes were filled with confusion and fear. "What's happening to me?" he moaned, his voice barely above a whisper. Hannibal could see the panic in Will's eyes, and he knew that he needed to act quickly to calm his friend's nerves.

"Take a deep breath, Will," Hannibal said soothingly with a calm voice that resonated with confidence. "You're going to have another seizure, but I'm here with you. You're safe," Hannibal reassured Will, whose eyes were tightly shut in anticipation of the impending seizure. Hannibal reached out and placed a reassuring hand on Will's shoulder, feeling the tension in his muscles. "Just focus on your breathing. In through your nose, out through your mouth. That's it. Take your time," Hannibal encouraged Will to take slow, deep breaths.

Will followed Hannibal's instructions, inhaling deeply through his nostrils and exhaling slowly through his mouth. He tried to relax his body, but eventually started to struggle as the seizure started. His body tensed up and started to twitch, as Hannibal continued to guide him with a steady voice. Abigail watched as Will started to have the seizure, feeling helpless and not knowing how to help. Heeding Hannibal's words, she left the room, understanding that she couldn't assist and she wouldn't want to watch the painful ordeal.

Hannibal watched as Will sat in his chair, his face contorted in pain. Without hesitation, Hannibal scooped him up from his chair and placed him on the floor, making sure he didn't fall off. He then cradled Will's head in his lap and began stroking his hair softly. Silence enveloped them as Hannibal waited for the pain to pass. He felt Will's body twitch and tense under his hands, so he gently caressed his face, hoping to provide some comfort during this ordeal.

During Will's seizure, his body was gripped by intense muscle contractions, causing his limbs to twitch and jerk uncontrollably. His face was twisted into a grimace of pain, and his breathing became shallow and rapid. The sweat on his skin glistened in the light, and his eyes were tightly shut as he struggled to cope with the intense pain.

As the seizure progressed, his body continued to twitch and tense, causing him to arch his back and thrash his limbs. His hands curled into fists, and his feet kicked out wildly. The muscles in his neck became rigid, and his head jerked back and forth rapidly. The veins in his forehead bulged, and his breathing became labored.

Hannibal watched as Will's body moved uncontrollably, his own heart racing with fear and concern. He could feel the tension in his friend's muscles, and he knew that this was a particularly severe seizure. He gently placed a hand on Will's forehead, feeling the heat of his feverish skin. He spoke softly and calmly, hoping to provide some comfort and support during this difficult time.

Despite the intensity of the seizure, Hannibal remained calm and composed, his years of medical expertise allowing him to recognize the signs and take appropriate action. He knew that Will needed him to be strong and focused, and he was determined to do everything in his power to help his friend through this difficult ordeal.

As the seizure finally began to subside, Will's body gradually relaxed, and his breathing became deeper and more regular. The tension in his muscles slowly dissipated, and his limbs stopped twitching. His face, still contorted with pain, gradually began to soften, and his eyes fluttered open. Hannibal continued to stroke his hair gently, murmuring words of encouragement and reassurance.

For a few moments, Will lay there, his body still weak and trembling from the seizure. Will was disoriented and confused, his mind still reeling from the intensity of the seizure. Hannibal was there for him, though, offering him a reassuring smile and a steady hand to hold onto. Will felt a sense of relief wash over him, knowing that he wasn't alone in this struggle. As will's body finally relaxed into a peaceful state, Will released his grip on Hannibal's hand. Looking around the room, he couldn't help but feel a sense of relief that the seizure had finally passed. However, as hannibal observed Will's still body, he couldn't shake the feeling of concern that lingered within him. Hannibal knew that even though the seizure

had ended, Will's condition was far from stable. He wondered what the future held for Will and for himself. Despite the uncertainty, Hannibal knew that he would remain by Will's side, offering his support and unwavering loyalty.

Will's face was contorted with pain as he attempted to push himself up from the floor. Despite Hannibal's attempts to keep him down and hold his shoulder, Will managed to shove his hand off and stumbled to his feet. His vision was fading fast, and he grasped the nearest chair to steady himself. As he stood there, his head reeling and the room spinning beneath him, a wave of dizziness washed over him, threatening to send him back to the floor. Hannibal watched with concern as Will fought to stay upright, his body swaying slightly as he struggled to regain his balance. Finally, with a deep breath, Will steadied himself and turned to face Hannibal, determination etched onto his face despite the pain that still lingered.

Will's mouth was invaded by a bitter, rotten taste, which caused an abundance of saliva to fill up his mouth. This was a clear sign for Will that he was about to throw up, something that he had become all too familiar with. He knew that after every seizure, he would typically become ill for a while. The nausea and vomiting were almost always accompanied by a headache and dizziness, which made it difficult for him to function normally for a few days after the seizure. Will had learned to cope with the aftermath of his seizures over time.

Will gingerly made his way to the bathroom, the sharp pain in his stomach making him feel like he might collapse any moment. Abigail was sitting on the stairs, tears threatening to spill from her eyes as she watched him emerge from the room. He saw Abigail's worried expression and realised she had been there all along. He tried to thank her but the nausea in his stomach made it hard to speak. He leaned against the wall, feeling the coolness of the tiles against his forehead, and took a deep breath in an attempt to regain his composure.

Will's struggles with his mental health had reached a critical point. The stress of his job, combined with the weight of his personal problems, was taking a severe toll on him. Even with the support of his family, Will was struggling to cope with the intensity of his emotions. Hannibal remained by his side, doing everything in his power to help his friend through this difficult time. However, it remained to be seen whether their bond would be strong enough to weather the storm that was brewing.

Abigail burst into tears, her voice shaking as she spoke. "Will..." she began, struggling to get the words out. Will did his best to listen, but he could feel a queasiness rising in his throat. He knew that throwing up would be highly inappropriate at this moment, so he tried to suppress the feeling. Meanwhile, Hannibal leaned against the door frame and placed a comforting hand on Will's shoulder. It was clear that the situation was emotionally charged, and Will was doing his best to keep it together despite his physical discomfort. As Abigail continued to speak, Will focused on his breathing and tried to push the nausea to the back of his mind. The discomfort he felt wasn't going away. He tried to ignore it at first, but it persisted. His stomach churned, and before he knew it, he was rushing to the bathroom. He gripped the toilet seat tightly as his body convulsed with a wave of nausea.

Will's body was wracked with pain as he lay on the bathroom floor, his stomach heaving with each convulsion. He felt weak and helpless, unable to do anything to stop the intense waves of nausea that were overwhelming him. Hannibal's voice echoed in the back of his mind, a

calming presence that helped him to focus on his breathing and endure the pain. Abigail hovered nearby, her worried expression a constant reminder of the seriousness of his condition. Will knew that he was in good hands, but he couldn't help but feel a sense of despair at the thought of having to go through this again and again.

Hannibal squatted down, taking a moment to assess Will's condition. Wills body shook gently. "Are you okay, Will?" he asked, placing a gentle hand on his shoulder. Will shook his head weakly, his eyes still closed.

Hannibal looked up at Abigail, who was watching them with concern. "Go get a towel and a bowl for me, dear, will you?" he requested calmly. Abigail quickly complied, returning with the requested items.

Hannibal grabbed the towel and dipped it into the bowl of warm water. He then squeezed it to remove the excess water and proceeded to wipe away the beads of sweat that had formed on Will's forehead. He could see the relief in Will's face as he cooled him down. Hannibal whispered softly, "You'll be okay," trying to reassure him.

"Abigail, please bring the same to my room," Hannibal requested. Abigail nodded and left to retrieve whatever it was that Hannibal needed. Hannibal then carefully positioned his arms beneath Will and lifted him up. He couldn't help but feel a sense of sobering realisation as he noticed how little Will weighed. It was a stark reminder of how much strain Will had been through.

Will could no longer bear the pain and discomfort that had plagued him for so long. In Hannibal's arms, he writhed and moaned before finally breaking down in tears. "I can't do this anymore," Will cried, his body shuddering with sobs. "Please, make it stop." Hannibal held him close, his heart breaking for his beloved Will. He knew how difficult this was for him, and he would do anything to ease his suffering. Hannibal gently stroked Will's hair, whispering soothing words to him, promising that he would find a way to help him through this. And so they stayed, wrapped in each other's arms, until the tears subsided and Will's breathing became steady at last.

Hannibal walked into his room, Will still in his arms. Once they reached the bed, Hannibal gently laid Will down and pulled up the covers to tuck him in. Will's eyes pleaded with him to stay, and Hannibal couldn't help but feel a small smile tug at the corners of his lips. He knew he couldn't stay for long, though. He had other things to attend to, like making sure Abigail was comfortable and settled in for the night.

Speaking of Abigail, she had been standing by the door, watching the exchange between Hannibal and Will with a look of concern on her face. Hannibal turned to her and gave her a reassuring nod. "Thank you, Abigail. You may go now. I'll take care of him from here." Abigail nodded back and left the room, closing the door softly behind her.

Hannibal then turned his attention back to Will. He reached for the bowl and towel that Abigail had brought in earlier and placed them on the nightstand. "Here," he said, handing the bowl to Will. "This is for you to throw up in. Don't worry if you don't make it in there, but preferably in the bowl." He placed the bowl by Will's side and sat down on the edge of the bed.

"Would you like me to stay with you for a little while?" Hannibal asked softly, reaching out to brush a strand of hair away from Will's forehead. "I have some work to do, but I can stay for a bit if you need me to." Will nodded, grateful for the offer. Hannibal smiled and settled in next to him, ready to offer whatever comfort he could as Will drifted off to sleep.

Hannibal was lying down, with Will's head nuzzled into his armpit, feeling the gentle rise and fall of Will's chest as he slept. Hannibal gazed down at Will, noticing how his clothes were practically hanging off him. A smile crept across Hannibal's face; the two of them were a pair, with a deep understanding of each other's struggles.

Will had previously self-harmed and was now able to support Hannibal in his current struggles. But there was more to Hannibal's past than Will knew. Hannibal had a history with an eating disorder, albeit different from Will's anorexia. Hannibal had suffered through bulimia, a condition that he had managed to overcome with time and therapy. As he lay there with Will, Hannibal felt grateful for the bond they had formed and the understanding they shared. It was a rare and precious thing, and he knew he would do anything to protect it.

Hannibal had been feeling the weight of self-doubt as he watched Will's condition worsen by the day. It was becoming increasingly difficult for him to cope with the situation at hand, as his own struggle with food was getting in the way of his ability to be there for Will. Hannibal knew he needed to prioritise his own well-being in order to better support Will. After a long day, he felt a sense of relief wash over him as he exhaled deeply, and then let himself fall asleep next to his friend, Will. The sound of Will's gentle breathing and the feeling of the soft mattress beneath him made him feel safe and comfortable, sleep eventually overcoming him.

Buckets.

Chapter Summary

Hannibal struggles with his own eating disorder while supporting Will's recovery from his own illness. He confides in Abigail.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will had a difficult night, tossing and turning in his bed. Hannibal was unable to get a good night's rest due to Will's constant movements. To make matters worse, Will was still feeling ill and spent most of the night throwing up. The unpleasant smell lingered in the room, making it difficult for Hannibal to get any sleep. Despite his best efforts to fall asleep, Hannibal remained awake, feeling exhausted and frustrated by the situation.

As Hannibal woke up to the soft light filtering through his curtains, he felt a sense of exhaustion that seemed to permeate every inch of his body. He dragged himself out of bed and glided towards the bathroom, hoping that the water would help to alleviate the fatigue that weighed so heavily on him. As he stood under the shower head, he felt the water wash over him, his fingers tracing over his muscles.

As he faced the water, he let out a deep sigh, closing his eyes and blowing the water off his face. Despite his best efforts to focus on the present moment, his mind kept wandering back to the past, to the recent situation that had left him feeling so drained, defeated and focused on past issues. Hannibal had always prided himself on his rationality, his ability to remain objective and logical even in moments of great stress. But lately, he couldn't help but feel as though the chemicals in his brain were betraying him, leading him to believe things that he knew were untrue.

As he finished his shower, he slowly walked towards the mirror, which was foggy due to the steam. He took his towel and wiped the mirror, revealing his reflection. He looked at himself, examining every inch of his body. He couldn't help but feel a tinge of jealousy when he noticed how slim Will had become. Hannibal knew from both a personal and professional viewpoint that eating disorders were competitive and he knew that if he gave in to his own disorder, it would be a slippery slope to failure. He remembered the long and difficult journey he had taken to get where he was now, and he reminded himself that he was in control of his own body and mind. But his determination and feeling of failure towards Will was immense. he truly felt like he had failed as a psychiatrist and a… well, a boyfriend.

Hannibal tried to shake off the feeling of malaise that seemed to cling to him like a heavy coat. He knew that he needed to face the day ahead, to tackle the challenges that lay before him with the same determination and focus that had always served him so well. But for the

first time in a long while, he felt a sense of doubt creeping in, a sense that perhaps he wasn't as strong or resilient as he had always believed.

Hannibal took a deep breath and exhaled slowly, trying to push away the negative thoughts that threatened to overwhelm him. He knew that he needed to find a way to be there for Will while also taking care of himself. He decided that he would make Will breakfast, something bland and gentle on his stomach, and then call Dr. Du Maurier to discuss his concerns about both Will and himself. He knew that he needed to prioritise his mental health and take a step back from his work for a while. With a plan forming in his mind, Hannibal felt a small sense of relief wash over him.

Hannibal quickly dressed himself and made his way to the kitchen. He began to prepare Will's breakfast, carefully considering the ingredients to ensure that it would be easy on his stomach. As he worked, he couldn't help but think about the events of the past few days, about the toll they had taken on both himself and Will. He knew that he needed to find a way to help Will recover, but he also knew that he couldn't do it alone. He would need to reach out for help and support, both for himself and for Will.

As Hannibal cooked, he heard Will retching from upstairs and realized that maybe Will wasn't ready for breakfast yet, but Abigail was. She was very happy that there was breakfast made when she got up. The aroma of roasted coffee and freshly baked muffins filled the air, and Hannibal couldn't help but feel a sense of satisfaction at the sight of the warm and inviting breakfast spread on the table.

“How is he?” Abigail chirped, taking a seat at the table. Hannibal was jealous at her clearly rested attitude, but he didn't let it show.

“Ill.” Hannibal responded, dishing up her breakfast. He couldn't help but feel a tinge of sadness as he thought about Will's condition. Hannibal sighed and handed her her plate, but his mind was preoccupied with thoughts of Will and his own conflicted feelings about food.

Abigail frowned at his short answer, sensing that something was off. “And how are you?” she asked, looking at him with concern.

He threw the towel over his shoulder and sighed dejectedly. "I'm alright, thank you for asking Abigail," he replied, his thoughts still on Will and his own mental state. Hannibal couldn't help but wonder if there was something he could do to help Will, to make him feel better and to ease the burden of his illness.

“Hey!” she grabbed his attention. “Really. You can tell me.”

Hannibal looked at Abigail, her kind eyes and warm smile making him feel a little less alone. He knew that he couldn't keep everything bottled up inside, that he needed to talk to someone about his struggles with food and his feelings towards Will. Taking a deep breath, he decided to take a chance and confide in Abigail. "I'm just... struggling a bit," he admitted, his voice steady. "With food and with Will."

Abigail's kind and empathetic demeanor made Hannibal feel comfortable enough to share more about his struggles. He told her about the eating disorder he had battled with for years,

and how he had managed to keep it under control through a strict routine and discipline. But lately, he found himself slipping back into old habits, triggered by Will's own struggles with food and his fear of losing him to the illness.

Abigail listened intently, offering words of encouragement and support. Hannibal felt a sense of gratitude towards her, grateful for her unwavering support and understanding.

"Umm...I was wondering if you would like to have breakfast with me at the moment?" she tentatively inquired, her eyes pleading with him. Hannibal was hesitant to accept, but her persistence and genuine interest eventually won him over. They sat down at the small table in her kitchen, the smell of coffee and freshly baked goods filling the air. As they ate, they shared stories of their childhood and talked about their future aspirations. Hannibal found himself enjoying her company more than he had anticipated.

Over the next few days, Hannibal focused on taking care of himself and supporting Will in his recovery. He made sure to stick to his own routine and to keep his own eating disorder in check, seeking help and support when needed. He also encouraged Will to increase their therapy sessions.

As time passed, Hannibal began to see positive changes in both himself and Will. The smell of vomit no longer lingered in their room, and Will's appetite slowly began to return. Hannibal felt a sense of pride and satisfaction seeing Will's progress and knowing that he had played a small role in his recovery.

Chapter End Notes

Hannibal definitely resonates with bulimia (self projection)

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